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# IMAGINARY LIVES

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## *PREFACE*

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THE science of history leaves us uncertain as to individuals, revealing only those points by which individuals have been attached to generalities. History tells us that Napoleon was ill on the day of Waterloo; that we must attribute Newton's excessive intellectuality to the absolute consistency of his temperament; that Alexander was drunk when he killed Klitos; and that the fistula of Louis XIV was perhaps the cause of certain of his resolutions. Pascal speculates on the length of Cleopatra's nose . . . the possible consequences had it been a trifle shorter; and on the grain of sand in Cromwell's urethra. All these facts are valued only when they modify events or alter a series of events. They are causes, established or possible. We must leave them to savants.

Contrary to history, art describes individuals, desires only the unique. It does not classify, it unclassifies. No matter how much they may engage us, our generalizations may be likened to those pursued upon the planet Mars, and three lines drawn to intersect them might form a triangle on all the points of the universe. But consider a leaf with its intricate nerve system, its color variegated by shade and sun; the imprint of a raindrop; the tiny mark left by an insect; the silver trace of a snail; or the first mortal touch of autumn gold. Search all the forests of the earth for another leaf exactly like it. I defy you to find one. There is no science for the teguments of a leaf, for the filaments of a cell structure, the winding of a vein, the passion of a habit, or for the twists and quirks of character.

That a man's nose is broken; one of his eyes higher than the other; an arm shrunk; that he habitually eats chicken at a certain hour or prefers Malvoise to Châ-

teau-Margaux . . . there is something unparalleled in the world. Thales might have said  $\Upsilon\text{N}\Omega\theta\text{I}\ \Sigma\text{EAYTON}$  as well as Socrates, but he would never have scratched his leg in precisely the same manner before drinking the hemlock draught. Great minds and their ideas are humanity's common heritage. Actually, great men themselves possess only that which is bizarre about them. To describe a man in all his anomalies a book should be a work of art, like a Japanese print whereon the image of a tiny caterpillar, seen once at one particular hour of a day, is found eternally recorded.

On such individual facts history is silent. In the crude collection of material furnishing our testimony we find few singular or inimitable relics. Misers all, valuing only politics or grammar, the ancient biographers have transmitted no more to us than the discourses of great men or the titles of their works. It was Aristophanes himself who gave us the joy of knowing that he was bald;



and if the flat nose of Socrates had not served in literary comparisons, if his custom of walking barefoot had not been part of his system of philosophic scorn, we should have nothing left of him but moral dissertations. The gossip of Suetonius Tranquillus remains little more than spiteful polemic. Plutarch's genius made an artist of him at times, though while he realized the essence of his art, he was always imagining parallels, as if two men properly described in all their qualities can ever resemble each other. In our search we are driven to consider the Atheneum, Aulu-Gelle, the scholiasts and even Diogenes Lærcæ, who thought he had composed a sort of history of philosophy.

In modern times the study of the individual has developed advantageously. Boswell's book would have been perfect had he not felt obliged to quote Johnson's correspondence together with digressions on Johnson's works. More satisfying on the whole are Aubrey's *Lives of Eminent Men*,

Aubrey had the instinct of a true biographer, there can be no doubt about it. What a pity it is that this excellent antiquarian's style could not rise to the level of his conceptions! His book might have been the eternal masterpiece of its species, for Aubrey never saw the necessity of establishing connections between individual facts and general actions. Others, he knew, would some day mark the celebrity of those great men in whom he interested himself, and he was satisfied. Statesman, poet or clock-maker, each subject finds, under his pen, some unique trait distinguishing that man forever among all men.

During his one hundred and ten years of life the painter Hokusai hoped to arrive at the ideal of his art. In that moment, he said, every point and every line traced by his pencil should be a living thing. By "living" he meant unique and individual. Now lines and points are superlatively alike: geometry is founded on that postulate. Yet

Hokusai's perfection of art required a superlative difference between them. To that end ideal biography should seek infinite differentiation between two philosophies invented around the same metaphysic. That is why Aubrey, concerning himself uniquely with men, never attained perfection, for he never accomplished the miraculous transformation of resemblances and diversities hoped for by Hokusai. But neither did Aubrey attain the age of one hundred and ten. He is estimable, nevertheless, and he himself has summed up the limitations of his own book. "I recall," he writes in his preface to Anthony Wood, "General Lambert's words 'the best of men are but men at best' and you will find numerous examples of such in this crude, precocious collection. Should these arcana be revealed today or thirty years hence? It might be better if author and subject (like medlars) first die and rot."

Among Aubrey's predecessors can be found some of the rudiments of his art.



Diogenes Lærcæ tells us that Aristotle wore on his abdomen a leather bag filled with hot oil, and that a quantity of terra-cotta vases were found in his house after his death. We shall never know what Aristotle did with all that pottery, and the mystery is as agreeable as Boswell's conjectures regarding the orange peelings which Johnson was accustomed to save and carry in his pockets. For once Diogenes Lærcæ rises near to the sublimity of inimitable Boswell, but such pleasures are rare. Aubrey, however, offers them in nearly every line. Milton, he tells us, "pronounced the letter R very hard." Spencer was a "little man with his hair cut short, wearing a little collarette and little cuffs." Barclay "lived in England during the reign of King Jacobus. He was an old man with a white beard and he wore a plumed hat that scandalized his severe neighbors." Erasmus "did not care for fish in spite of the fact that he came from a fishing village." As for Bacon, "none of his serv-

ants dared appear before him in any boots but those made of Spanish leather, for his nose was sure to detect the smell of calf skin, which he detested." Doctor Fuller "concentrated so deeply upon his work that he often ate a two-penny roll without ever noticing it, as he walked out before dinner, wrapped in thought." Aubrey gives the following account of Sir William Davenant: "I attended his funeral. He had a walnut coffin. Sir John Denham vowed it the finest coffin he had ever seen." Of Ben Jonson he wrote "I have heard Mr. Lacy, the actor, say he had a habit of wearing a cloak like a coachman's, with vents under the armpits." Aubrey's record of William Prynne declares "his manner of working was thus: he put on a tall pointed cap that kept sliding down over his eyes, serving as an eye-shade, and about every three hours his servants brought him a loaf of bread and a pot of ale to refresh his spirit, and so he worked on, drinking and munching, until evening when he

ate a good dinner." Hobbes, says Aubrey, "grew very bald in his old age. It was his custom to study bareheaded, saying he never took cold, but was very much annoyed by the flies lighting on his bald head." Of John Harrington's *Oceana* Aubrey tells us nothing, though he relates the following story of its author: "In A. D. 1660 he was made a prisoner in the tower under close guard, and was afterwards removed to Portsey Castle. His confinement in these prisons (he was a hot-headed, high-spirited gentleman) brought on delirium or madness. He never became violent, for he talked reasonably enough and was very pleasant company, but was pursued by the fantastic notion that his perspiration turned into flies and bees *ad cetera sobrius*. He had a portable house put up in Mr. Hart's garden (facing St. James's Park), and there he made his experiments. Pushing his house into the full sunlight, he closed all the win-



dows and sat down with a fox brush to massacre all the flies and bees discovered. Since he always made the experiment in warm weather, there were usually a few flies in the folds of the curtains. When the heat drew them out after a quarter of an hour or so, he would exclaim, 'now can't you see plainly enough they come from me?' "

Here is what Aubrey says of Merton: "His real name was Head. Mr. Bovey knew him well. Born in . . ., he was at one time a bookseller and had also traveled with the Gypsies. His goggling eyes gave him the air of a rogue, for he could change them into any form he wished. Bankrupt twice or three times over, he began to sell books toward the last. He earned his living at scribbling, for which he was paid twenty shillings a page, and he wrote several books: *The English Rogue*, *The Art of Wheeling*, etc. He was drowned at sea while on his way to Plymouth about 1676, when he

was about fifty years old." But I must quote his biography of Descartes:

"M<sup>eur</sup> RENATUS DES CARTES

Nobilis Gallus, Perroni Dominus, summus Mathematicus et Philosophus, natus turonum, pridie Calendas Apriles 1596. Denatus Holmiæ, Calendus Februarii, 1650. (I find this inscription on his portrait by C. V. Dalen.) How did he spend his youth, and by what means become so learned? He has given the world knowledge of these matters in his treatise *De la Method*. The Society de Jesus prides itself with having had the honor of his education. For a number of years he lived at Egmont near The Hague, and several of his books are dated from there. He was far too wise a man to encumber himself with a wife, but being nevertheless a man with a man's desires and appetites, he took for a companion a handsome, well-made woman whom he loved, and who bore him several children

## P R E F A C E

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(two or three, I believe). It would be very surprising had the offspring of such a father not received excellent educations. So eminently learned was he that all the scholars of the day visited him, many asking to see his instruments (in those days the science of mathematics was thought to consist largely in a knowledge of instruments). Then the great savant would pull out a little drawer in his table and show his guests a compass with one arm broken, a twisted scrap of paper serving in place of the missing part."

Aubrey clearly understood this phase of his work. He was perfectly conscious of what he did. Do not think he mistook the value of Hobbes or Descartes as philosophers. He was simply not interested there. He tells us plainly enough that Descartes himself has explained his ideas and systems to the world. Aubrey does not ignore the fact that Harvey discovered the principle of the blood's circulation, but he prefers to note down how this great man strolled abroad in



his nightshirt to walk off the insomnia, that he was a faulty penman and that the most celebrated doctors in London would not have given sixpence for any of his prescriptions. Aubrey is sure he is startling us when he describes Francis Bacon's eye as being fine, hazel, and quick like a viper's. But Aubrey was not the artist that Holbein was. He never knew how to fix an individual forever in our minds by giving us his special traits against a background of resemblances to the average or the ideal. He put life in the eye, the nose, the leg or the pout of his models; he could not animate the face. Old Hokusai saw very well the necessity of drawing generalities so that they should seem to be individual. Aubrey failed to penetrate as deep as that. Were Boswell's book confined to ten pages it would be the artistic masterpiece so long awaited. Doctor Johnson's good taste guided him safely through the vulgar and the commonplace. Boswell

has slighted the bizarre violence that gave Johnson a quality unique in all the world. One might print a *Scientia Johnsoniana* with an index Boswell would not have had the esthetic courage to choose from.

As an art, biography is founded upon choice; truth need not be its preoccupation, for out of a chaos of human traits it can create. To create the world, said Leibnitz, God chose the best from the possible. So, like some inferior deity, biography should select unique individuals from the realm of human material available. And it should fail in its art no farther than God fails in His favor and mercy. In both cases instinct must be infallible. Patient men have assembled ideas, records of events and descriptions of faces—all for the benefit of biography. In the midst of these great collections art must choose what it needs to compose a form that will be like no other form. It matters not if this form resemble something formerly

created by a superior god, so long as it is unique and a genuine creation.

As a rule biographers have unfortunately considered themselves historians, thus depriving us of many admirable portraits. They have supposed the lives of great men only would interest us. Art is a stranger to such considerations. To the eyes of a painter a portrait of an unknown man, by Cranach, is as valuable as a portrait of the great Erasmus. For the name, Erasmus, cannot make a picture inimitable. Biography should give as much worth to an obscure actor as it gives to the life of Shakespeare. Deep is the instinct compelling us to note with pleasure the shortened sterno-mastoid formation in a bust of Alexander, or the lock of hair in portraits of Napoleon. The Mona Lisa smile of which we know nothing (it is possibly a man's face), remains forever mysterious and arresting. A grimace drawn by Hokusai leads us to profound meditation. If the art in which Boswell and Aubrey

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excelled is to be continued, minute records of great men or epochs or events of the past are not especially needed. With equal care must be recounted the unique existences of men—priests, criminals or nobodies.



EMPEDOCLES

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*Supposed God*



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## EMPEDOCLES

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No one knows in what manner he was born or how he came upon the earth. He appeared near the golden banks of the river Acragas, in the good city of Agrigentum, a little after the time Xerxes had the sea beaten with chains. Tradition tells only that his grandfather named him Empedocles; nothing more is known. Undoubtedly he was said to be self-conceived, for he was admittedly a god. His disciples were sure that before visiting in his glory the Sicilian lands, he had already passed through four existences, having been plant, fish, bird and girl. He wore a purple mantle with his long locks falling over it; he had a fillet of gold around his head, on his feet were brazen sandals, and he carried a garland of fleece and laurel intertwined.

By the touch of his hand he cured the sick,

or, mounted on a chariot, he would recite verses in the Homeric style, with pompous accents, his head raised toward the heavens. Great troops of people followed him, prostrating themselves before him as they listened to his poems. Under bright skies shining over fields of grain, men from all parts came to Empedocles, their arms filled with offerings. He held them spellbound, singing of a divine crystal vault, the mass of fire we call the sun, and the love that envelops all like a vast sphere.

All beings, he said, are no more than disjointed fragments of this sphere of love, though hate has been insinuated into them. And that which we now call love, he contended, is our desire to unite ourselves one unto the other, to merge and be lost as we once were lost on the breast of this great sphere-god whom discord has alienated. He invoked the day when the old divinity should rise again after the transformation of souls. For, he said, the world we know is a product



of hatred and its dissolution shall be the work of love. In this manner he chanted through the towns and through the fields, the brazen sandals of Laconia tinkling on his feet while a sound of cymbals went on before him. Meanwhile from Etna's crater rose a black smoke column casting its shadow over Sicily.

Like a king of heaven, Empedocles was robed in purple and girdled with gold, while the Pythagorians wore thin linen tunics and shoes of papyrus. He knew how to drive away rheums, they said, how to heal sores and how to draw the evil from afflicted limbs. They begged him to make the storms cease, so he conjured with tempests from a crest of the hills. At Selinus he turned two streams into the bed of a third and stemmed a flood; then the people of that place adored him, raising a temple in his honor and striking coins on which his image appeared face to face with the image of Apollo.

Others pretended he was a wizard in-

structed by Persian magicians; that he possessed the power of necromancy and the science of those herbs which render men mad. One day as he dined with Anchitos, a madman rushed into the hall, sword upraised. Empedocles stretched out his arms, chanting the Homeric verse on the nepenthe of forgetfulness, and a spell descended over the madman until he stood there rigid, blade in air, forgetting his dementia as if he had drunk sweet poison mixed with sparkling wine.

The afflicted came to Empedocles outside the cities, where he was often surrounded by a crowd of miserable folk. Women mingled in the following and kissed the hem of his precious mantle. One of those women was called Panthea, daughter of a noble of Agrigentum. She was to have been consecrated to Artemis, but she fled the cold statue of the goddess, vowing her virginity to Empedocles. No one ever witnessed their affection, for Empedocles preserved a divine detachment, speaking always in epic meter

with the dialect of Ionia, while the people of Agrigentum knew only the Dorian. All his gestures were sacred; when he met with men it was to bless or cure them. Usually he remained silent. None who followed him ever saw him sleep; they knew him only as a majestic being.

Panthea dressed in fine wool and gold, her hair arranged after the rich mode of Agrigentum, where life ran smooth. A red strophe supported her breasts and her sandals were perfumed. As for the rest of her, she was tall and fine and her color was desirable. It is impossible to be sure that Empedocles loved her, but he pitied her. Soon a breath of Asia brought the plague to those Sicilian fields. Many were touched by the black fingers of the pest, and fallen beasts strewed the edge of the prairie where they could be seen beside the carcasses of sheep, dead with their mouths gaping toward the heavens and their ribs sticking out white and dry through their sides. Stricken by this

malady, Panthea fell at Empedocles' feet and breathed no more. Those who were near raised her stiffening limbs to bathe them with spirits and aromatics. They loosed the red strophe from her young breasts, winding a funereal band in its place. Her mouth, lips slightly parted, was sealed by a tight bandage. Her deep eyes no longer mirrored the light.

Empedocles gazed down at her where she lay. He took the golden circlet from his forehead and he touched her with it. He placed the garland of prophetic laurel on her breast, chanting unknown verses of the soul's migration. And three times he commanded her to rise and to walk; then the people were filled with terror. At his third command Panthea left the kingdom of shadows, life came into her body and she rose to her feet, all swathed as she was in the cloths of the tomb. And the people saw that Empedocles had power to recall the dead.



Pysianactes, father of Panthea, now adored the new god. Long tables were spread under the trees of his estate, where a feast of wines and viands was offered. By the side of Empedocles slaves held up great torches, while heralds proclaimed him—as did the solemn mystery of his own deep silence. Suddenly, at the third watch of the night, the torches sputtered out and darkness enveloped the worshipers. Then a strong voice called, “Empedocles!” When the lights burned once more Empedocles was gone. Men never saw him again.

A frightened slave told how he had watched a red flare cut the night near Etna’s summit. At the first dull gleam of dawn the worshipers climbed the sterile slopes of the mountain. Jets of fire were still darting like tongues from the volcano’s crater. In the porous lava on the brink of the burning abyss, they found a brazen sandal writhen by the flames.



EROSTRAT

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*Incendiary*





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## *EROSTRAT*

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WITH her two river harbors the city of Ephesus, birthplace of Herostratos, stretched across the mouth of the Cayster as far as Panorama Quay. From there the shores of Samos could be seen in a misty line along the dark sea horizon. Wealthy in gold, in stuffs and in roses, Ephesus prospered now, since the Magnesians with their dogs of war and their javelineers had been vanquished on the banks of the Meander, and Miletus the Magnificent destroyed by the Persians.

Relaxed during these days of peace, Ephesus fêted courtesans in the temple of Aphrodite Hetaira. Citizens arrayed themselves in tunics of amorgine, in transparent garments of spun linen tinted violet, purple and crocodile green. They wore sarapides the color of yellow apples or white or rose,

and Egyptian fabrics in hyacinth shades, shot with flame hues and the changing tints of the sea. Their Persian calasiris were of finest crinkled tissues besprinkled with clusters of tiny golden beads.

On the banks of the Cayster between Mount Prion and another lofty cliff, stood the great temple of Artemis, built after one hundred and twenty years of labor. The porches were of ebony and cypress, the heavy supporting columns were red, and tall paintings ornamented the inner walls. The shrine-room of the goddess was little and oval; in the center, graven with lunar symbols in gold, rose a huge black cone hewn out of solid rock. The triangular altar was of this same material as were several tables, these last being pierced with holes at regular spaces to drain the blood of sacrificial victims. Beside the tables hung broad golden hilted blades of steel for slitting human throats, and the floor was strewn with bloody cloths. The black idol was carved in the

form of two great breasts, hard and pointed. Such was Diana of Ephesus, her ancient divinity lost in the darkness of Egyptian tombs and Persian ritual. The treasure of the temple was secreted in a small coffer shaped like a miniature pyramid with brass-studded doors. There, among precious rings, coins and rubies, lay the manuscript of Heraclitus, prophet of the reign of fire. With his own hands the old philosopher had deposited the scroll at the base of the pyramid while the mason-builders were still at work.

The mother of Herostratos was a proud, harsh woman. His father's identity never became known, and Herostratos finally declared he had been sired by the fire. The crescent birth-mark under his left breast seemed certainly to blaze like a living flame on the night he was tortured. Those who assisted at his birth predicted his devotion to Artemis. Dark, swarthy, his face strangely lined, from childhood days he loved to walk

along the towering cliffs beneath the temple. He was ineligible for the priesthood, being of uncertain race, and several times the sacerdotal college warned him away from the Naos where he lurked, watching his chance to draw back the heavy sacred veils and behold the forbidden deity. He grew to hate her. He made a secret vow to violate her shrine.

To him his own name seemed comparable with no other, while his very physical being must be superior, he thought, to the rest of humanity. He wanted fame. At first he joined a group of philosophers who professed to teach the doctrines of Heraclitus, but the secret was not theirs, he knew. While it remained locked in the little pyramid with the temple treasure, Herostratos could only guess at the words of the master. He hardened himself to scorn the luxurious life of the city; courtesans and their loves disgusted him. It was said that he preserved his purity for the goddess, but Artemis had

no pity. In time he began to appear dangerous to the College of Gerousia, guardians of the temple, so with the satrap's permission they banished him beyond the city gates, where he took up his abode on the slopes of Koressos, in an old cave hollowed out by the ancient people. Some authorities have believed that Persian initiates came to him while he sat there through the nights, watching the far-off flare of the sacred lamps on the temple of Artemis, but his destiny was more probably revealed to him in a blazing vision. During his trial by torture he told how the meaning of the word Heraclitus (The way to Above) had flashed full and sudden upon his understanding, and how philosophy had taught him that the finest quality of the spirit is quickest tinder to the fire. His own spirit, he said, was in that sense perfect, therefore he had wished to proclaim it. For his action he gave no other reason than desire for fame and the joy of hearing his own name. His reign and his



alone, he declared, would remain absolute. Herostratos had been crowned by Herostratos. None knew his father . . . he was the son of his own labor and his labor was the essence of the world. Alone among men, he would be king, philosopher and God in one.

Moonless came the night of July 21 in the year 356, and the passions of Herostratos rose at that hour pitch upon pitch until they crystallized his old resolve to violate the shrine of Artemis. Up the tangled mountainside he crept, reaching the banks of the Cayster, then climbing by slow, painful degrees to the temple, where guardian priests slept beside their holy lamps. Seizing one of those lamps Herostratos strode on into the Naos. A heavy odor of spikenard rose before the glistening ebony balconies; a curtain, gold and purple threaded, hid the goddess. Passing this barrier Herostratos halted, trembling with excitement, as the light from his lamp fell upon the two erect

breasts of the terrible cone . . . next, his two hands were around the divinity in one long feverish embrace. When he arose at last he saw the little green treasure chest shaped like a pyramid. Catching hold of the brass spikes he swung open the door of it, plunging his fingers deep in virgin gems. But he drew forth only the papyrus scroll bearing the verses of Heraclitus. And there, under the glow of the sacred lamps, he learned it all.

His first eager look was enough. Before his eyes had left the ancient words his voice lifted in a shrill cry, "The fire, the fire!"

Touched by the flame of his lamp, the sacred veils burned slowly until the red tongues reached the perfumed oils and ointments. Then they flared up blue to the ceiling while the dread cone reflected the scene.

The fire mounted quickly to the capitals of the columns, creeping along the paneled vaulting overhead. One by one the golden

placks inscribed with attributes to the glory of Artemis fell crashing to the stones below. A crimson spout broke through the roof; the brazen tiles reflected it until the whole mountain was alight. And Herostratos stood up in the red glare, shouting his name aloud against the roar of the flames and the darkness.

All the sacred mount became a red pile in the midst of the night. When the guards caught Herostratos they were obliged to gag him to prevent him from shrieking his name again and again. Bound and gagged, he was thrown into a dungeon while the fire burned on.

Artaxerxes sent immediate orders for his trial by torture. Little was learned, for he admitted nothing save what has already been told. The twelve cities of Ionia issued a decree forbidding the pronounciation of his name through all future ages under penalty of death, but the whisper of it has persisted

even to us. The story of that night when Herostratos ravaged the temple of Ephesus was handed down through Alexander, King of Macedonia.





C R A T E S

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*C y n i c*



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## *CRATES*

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BORN at Thebes, he was a disciple of Diogenes and he also knew Alexander. From his father, a wealthy man named Ascondas, he inherited two hundred talents. Then one day, while attending a tragedy by Euripides, he beheld a vision. He saw Telephy, King of Mysia, dressed in beggar's rags with a basket in his hand. So Crates stood up on his feet there in the theater, declaring he would give the two hundred talents of his inheritance to all who wanted the money. Henceforth, he said, the garb of King Telephy would suffice him. Shaking with laughter, the Thebans trooped before his house where they found him laughing even louder than they. After throwing all his money and furniture out of the windows he took up a plain cloak and a leather sack and went away.

He went to Athens. In that city he spent his days walking the streets and his nights crouching against dirty walls. He put the doctrines of Diogenes into practice, all except the barrel. Crates thought even the barrel a superfluous dwelling. For a man, he contended, is neither a snail nor a Bernardine hermit.

He lived stark naked in the filth of the streets, filling his sack with dry crusts, rancid olives, and fish bones. He called the sack his city, a city without parasites or courtesans, he said, but a fine storehouse of thyme, garlic, figs, and bread for its king. So Crates carried his kingdom on his back and it fed him.

Though he never took part in public affairs, he never criticized them. He launched no insults nor did he approve this trait in Diogenes. Diogenes would call out, "Men, come to me!", then rap them with his cane when they came, saying, "I called for men, not excrements!"

Crates was kind to men. He reproached them with nothing. Sores and wounds he knew, and his greatest regret was that his body were not supple like a dog's so that he might lick them. He also deplored the necessity of nourishing himself with food and drink, for man, he thought, should be sufficient unto himself, asking no aid from the world. At any rate, he never hunted for water to wash in, being content to scratch himself against the walls after seeing how the asses did it. He seldom spoke of gods or questioned them. What difference did it make, said he, if there were gods or none, knowing as he did how little they could do for him. At first he reproached these divinities with having turned men's faces toward heaven, thus depriving them of the faculties enjoyed by animals on all fours. Since these gods have decided that we must eat to live, thought Crates, they might better have turned our faces to the earth where



food is, instead of twisting them up in the air to graze on the stars.

Life was not kind to Crates. His eyes grew bleary, exposed as they continually were to the acrid dusts of Attica, and an unknown skin plague covered his body with sores. While he scratched himself with his uncut nails he observed the twofold profit, as he called it, of wearing down these nails to their proper length while relieving his itch at the same time. He let his hair grow in a neglected mat on his head to protect him from the rain and sun.

When Alexander came to see him he flung no sharp gibes at the conqueror whom he considered merely as one with the spectators, acknowledging no difference between king and crowd. Crates no longer formed opinions about the great. Only men interested him, men and the problems of living his life as simply as possible. Diogenes with his chiding made Crates laugh no less than the pretensions of moral reformers. Holding

himself infinitely above such sordid cares, he transcribed the maxim from the Delphian temple to read, "See Thyself," and the idea of any knowledge whatsoever he thought absurd. He studied his bodily necessities, nothing more, striving always to reduce them to their simplest terms. Doglike, Diogenes snapped at life, but Crates lived as the dogs lived.

He had a disciple named Metrocles, a wealthy young man from Marona. Hipparchia, sister of Metrocles, fell in love with Crates. Beautiful and aristocratic as she was, she was certainly the smitten one for she sought the cynic out. It seemed impossible but it was true and nothing could turn her from him, neither his filthiness, nor his poverty, nor the horror of his public life. He warned her how he lived in the streets like a dog, scrambling for bones in the stench of gutters. He warned her further. If she came to him, he said, nothing of their life together should be hidden. He would want

her publicly whenever desire prompted, as the dogs do among dogs. Hipparchia heard all. She declared she would end her own life if her parents interfered, so they let her go. She left the village of Marona with her hair unbound, a single ragged garment covering her nakedness. From that day she lived with Crates and dressed as he dressed. It has been said that she bore him one child, and that the child was named Pasicles, though nothing authentic can be found of that incident.

Hipparchia was kind to the poor. Compassionate, she soothed the sick with her hands, cleansing their bloody wounds without repugnance. To her men became as sheep are to sheep or dogs to dogs. When nights were cold she and Crates slept close to other poor folk, sharing the warmth of their bodies. From the beasts they learned the wordless kindnesses of beasts. When men approached they held no preferences . . . they were men and that sufficed.

We know nothing more of Crates' wife; we are not told when she died or how. Metrocles, her brother, admired the cynic and imitated him, but Metrocles lacked tranquillity. Troubled continually by a flatulency he could not control, he resolved upon suicide. Learning of his ailment Crates went to him after first eating a quantity of lupine. When Metrocles confessed himself no longer able to support the disgrace of his infirmity, the cynic showed his disciple how all men are submitted by nature to the same evil. Upbraiding him because he had dared to be ashamed of others, Crates led Metrocles away and they lived long together in the streets of Athens, Hipparchia undoubtedly beside them. They talked little but were ashamed of nothing. When they lapped water from a puddle with the dogs the dogs respected them. They must have fought together over scraps of food, though the biographers fail to mention it. Crates died old, we know. We know he ended his days

squatting among bales of goods in a shed belonging to a shopkeeper from Piræus, and that he finally refused to move from that spot even to pick up scraps of meat. We know he was found there one day starved to death.



S E P T I M A

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*E n c h a n t r e s s*



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## SEPTIMA

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SEPTIMA was a slave under the African sun in the city of Hadrumetum. Her mother, Amœna, was a slave, and the mother of her mother—all had been slaves, beautiful and unknown, to whom the dark gods had revealed the spells of love and of death. Hadrumetum was a city of white houses, though the one where Septima lived was built of pink stones, the trembling tint of roses, while the garden paths were set with shells from Egypt, washed away by the tepid sea, where the seven deltas of the Nile spread out forming seven vases of different colors. The silvery voice of the Mediterranean could be heard from Septima's house by the sea. At her feet a fan of shimmering blue swept out to the horizon. The golden palms of her little hands were rouged, her fingertips tinged with fard, her lips touched

with myrrh and the anointed lids of her eyes drooped softly. Thus she appeared as she walked through the fringe of the city, carrying a basket of bread for the servants' table.

Septima fell in love with a young freeman named Sextilius, a son of Dionysia, but love was denied her, for she belonged to those who knew the mysteries of the lower world and served love's adversary whose name is Anteros. As swiftly as Eros aims the glances of eyes or whets the darts of his arrows, Anteros turns those glances aside and dulls the flying shafts. He is a kindly god, laboring among the dead, not cruel as the other is. Anteros possesses the nepenthe of forgetfulness. He holds love to be the worst of human afflictions; he pursues love to cure love. Powerless, however, to enter a heart once caught by Eros, he seizes that heart's affinity. This is the method of the strife between Eros and Anteros, and the reason why Septima could not love Sextilius, for when Eros touched her with

his flame, Anteros took the man she loved.

Septima saw the power of Anteros in the lowered lids of Sextilius. When purple trembled through the evening air she walked down the road to the sea. It was a quiet road, a road where lovers sipped wine-of-dates, leaning together against the polished walls of ancient tombs. An eastern wind blew its perfumes across the Necropolis. Veiled as yet, the young moon came timidly abroad. Sleeping in their sepulchers, many dead were enthroned on the hills around Hadrumetum, and here, under these stones, slept Phoinissa, sister of Septima, a slave girl dead at sixteen, before a man had ever breathed the sweetness of her. Phoinissa's tomb was straight and slim as her body had been. The stone contours following the outline of her breasts were crossed by bands like the strands of a strophe. On her low forehead hung a pendent stone, long and drooping between her eyes. From her blackened lips came still an aromatic vapor of embalm-

ing spices, and a green gold ring set with two pale, clouded rubies gleamed on her finger where she lay, dreaming eternally of things she had never known.

Under the virgin whiteness of the new moon Septima crouched by her sister's tomb, cooling her face against the sculptured garlands of white marble, her lips close to the aperture for receiving the funereal libations, and she poured out all her passions:

"O my sister," she began, "turn in your sleep and hear me! The little lamp of death's first hours is lighted. We gave you an ampula of colored glass, but you have let it slip through your fingers. Your necklace is broken and the golden beads are scattered around you. Nothing of ours is any longer yours, and he has you now, the hawk-headed one. O listen, my sister, you have power to carry my words. Fly to that heaven you know so well. Plead for me with Anteros. Implore the goddess Hathor. Beseech him, whose body once drifted safely on the



ByBLIS (PHOENECIA)  
 seas to Babylon. Sister, pity a sorrow you never learned! By the seven stars of the magicians of Chaldea I entreat you. By those dark powers Carthage knows, by Iao, Abriao, Salbaal and Bathbaal hear my invocation. Make him love me! Sextilius, son of Dionysia, make him burn with love of me, Septima, daughter of our mother, Amœna . . . so that he shall burn in the night, so that he shall come to me by thy tomb, Phoinissa!

“Or if that cannot be, let us both be plunged into the shadows. Let Anteros chill the breath of us—if he must quench this fire Eros has kindled! Perfumed death, drink the libation of my voice. *Achram-machalala!*”

Then the mummy of the virgin descended into the earth, teeth bared and gleaming.

And Septima walked shamefully between the tombs of the dead until the second watch of the night. Her eyes followed the flight of the moon across the sky. Her throat

felt the biting brine of the sea wind. When the first golden rays of dawn touched her she returned to Hadrumentum, her long blue veils floating behind her.

Meanwhile Phoinissa sped down the infernal paths, but the hawk-faced one would not listen to her plea. Hathor only stretched herself in her painted case, unheeding. And Phoinissa could not find Anteros for she had never known desire. But in her faded heart she felt that pity all the dead feel for the living. On the second night, at the hour when the departed return to cast their enchantments, her bandaged feet rustled again through the streets of Hadrumentum.

Sextilius lay breathing the deep, regular breath of sleep, his face turned towards the paneled ceiling of the chamber. All wrapped in her odorous cloths of the tomb, dead Phoinissa sat down beside his bed. She had neither brain nor entrails, though her heart was there, where it had been replaced, dry, in her mummied breast.

And at that moment Eros struck against Anteros, seizing the dead heart of Phoinissa, making her desire the body of Sextilius to sleep between her sister and herself in the house of death.

Phoinissa put her lips to the boy's mouth and the life went out of him like a bursted bubble. In her sister's cell she took Septima by the hand. And the kiss of Phoinissa and the clasp of Phoinissa killed them both, Septima and Sextilius, in the same hour. Such was the dark issue of the struggle between Eros and Anteros, wherefrom the infernal powers received a slave and a free-man.

Sextilius rests in the Necropolis at Hadrumetum between Septima, the enchantress, and her sister Phoinissa. The words of Septima's enchantment are inscribed upon a leaden plack which the enchantress lowered into Phoinissa's tomb through the little hole intended for libations.



L U C R E T I U S

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*P o e t*





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## LUCRETIOUS

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LUCRETIOUS belonged to a great family long retired from public life. Memories of his early days recall the dark porch of a house far up on a mountain, a bleak atrium and silent slaves. From childhood he heard nothing but scorn of politics and men. Memmius, a noble of his own age, played with him in the forest—played whatever games Lucretius commanded. Together they stood astonished before the gnarled faces of old trees or watched the leaves trembling in the sunlight—light vibrant and virile, strewn like a veil with dust of gold. Often they gazed on the striped backs of wild pigs rooting in the soil, and sometimes in their walks they met a murmurous swarm of bees or a caravan of marching ants. Emerging one day from a dense underbrush

they found themselves in a clearing set all around with ancient oaks so nicely placed that the circle of their tops formed a pool of clear blue sky above. The tranquillity of this spot was infinite. They were, it seemed, in a wide path leading straight to the divine depths of the heavens. Lucretius was touched by the calm benediction of the spaces.

With Memmius he left the serene forest temple to study eloquence at Rome. Presenting Lucretius with a Greek professor, the old gentleman who ruled the house on the mountain told him not to return until he had acquired the art of scorning human actions. Lucretius never saw the old gentleman again, for he died alone, cursing the tumult of society. When Lucretius came back to the empty house with its silent slaves and its bleak atrium, he brought an African woman, beautiful, barbarian, bad.

Memmius was gone to the house of his fathers. Lucretius had seen enough of fac-

tions and party warfare and corruption. He was in love.

He led an enchanted life at first. Dark against the rich wall-hangings shone the glossy hair of his African, as she stretched her long body out on a low couch, holding up an amphoræ of sparkling wine in her arms, arms heavy with translucent emeralds. She had a strange little gesture of trailing one finger across her brow, and her smiles were from a source as lost and obscure as the streams of her Africa. Instead of spinning wool, her fingers patiently picked it into little wisps that went sailing through the air around her.

Lucretius was filled with desire of her splendid body. He fondled her metallic breasts and he kissed the purple lips of her. Sighs and love words passed, making them laugh as they grew exhausted. They touched the filmy, opaque veil that separates all lovers, and their desire leaped until it reached that acute point whence it poured

through and through their flesh without quite plumbing the depths. Then the strange heart of the African recoiled, while Lucretius grew desperate because he could not accomplish the profundity of love. The woman turned cold, bleak and silent like the atrium and the silent slaves, and Lucretius went away into his library.

There he unwound a scroll whereon some writer had copied the doctrines of Epicure.

Immediately he understood the infinity of earthly things and the futility of striving towards ideals. He compared the universe to those little wisps of wool the fingers of his African sent floating through the air around her. Hives of bees, colonies of ants and the shifting pattern of the forest leaves became only groups of atoms to him. In his own body he felt the invisible struggle between discordant people anxious to separate. Glances passing from eye to eye he thought of now as rays of some more subtle matter. What was the likeness of his beau-

tiful barbarian but a mosaic agreeably colored? And the end of all this infinity he found sad and hopeless. Just as Roman factions warred with their armies and their criers, he saw turbulent masses of atoms disputing their obscure supremacy in the spilled blood of men. Death and dissolution, he saw, could only free these whirling masses to hurl them towards a thousand hopeless future struggles.

When Lucretius had been so instructed by the papyrus scroll with its Greek words interwoven one upon the other like worldly atoms, he left the bleak, lofty house of his ancestors and walked through the forest. He looked at the striped backs of the wild pigs forever nosing the earth. Emerging from a thick underbrush he came suddenly into that serene forest temple, then his eyes plunged up to the pool of blue sky and he rested.

From that point he regarded the swarming immensity of the universe: all the stones,

all the plants, the trees, the animals and the men; with their colors, their passions, their instruments and the histories of these many things, their births, their desires, their deaths. In the exact center of all that inevitable and necessary death he saw clearly the death of his beautiful African—and he wept.

Tears, he knew, came from the action of certain small glands under the eyelids, agitated by a procession of atoms leaving the heart, while the heart itself had been struck by a series of colored images detaching themselves from the surface of a woman's body. He knew that love was caused by a flood of atoms desiring to join themselves to other atoms. The sadness of death he knew to be the unsoundest of all earthly delusions, for the dead feel neither sorrow nor suffering, while he who mourns, mourns but his own end. He knew, too, that we are left no shade or ghost to shed tears on those bodies of ours stretched out at our



ghostly feet. Knowing as he did, the empty vanity of sorrow, love and death compared to those calm spaces in which we exist, he continued to weep and to desire love and fear death.

That is why he returned to the bleak house of his ancestors, seeking the beautiful African, whom he found brewing something in a caldron over a fire. She, too, had been thinking, though her thoughts were as mysterious as the source of her smiles. Lucretius looked down into the bubbling brew as it cleared slowly, like a green and stormy sky. The woman trailed one finger gently over her forehead when she handed him the cup. Lucretius drank and his reason left him as quickly, so that he forgot all the Greek words from the papyrus scroll. Then, being mad, he learned real love for the first time, and in the night, being poisoned, he learned death.



C L O D I A

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*I m p u r e   W o m a n*



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## CLODIA

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SHE was a daughter of Appius Claudius Pulcher, consul. When only a few years old she was distinguished among her brothers and sisters by the burning brightness of her large eyes. Tertia, her older sister, married early, and the youngest submitted herself entirely to Clodia's caprices. Her brothers, Appius and Caius, were already greedy for leather frogs, nutshell chariots and other toys; later they grew avaricious for silver sesterces. Pretty and feminine, Clodius became the companion of his sisters, and Clodia persuaded him to don a long-sleeved tunic, a little cap with golden strings, and a supple girdle. Then they tossed a flame-colored veil over him, carrying him away to their own chamber, where he remained with all three. Clodia was his favorite, but he

took also the innocence of Tertia and of the youngest girl.

When Clodia was eighteen her father died. Appius, her brother, then ruled the domain from their palace on Mount Palatin, while Caius prepared for public life. Delicate and beardless, Clodius remained with his sisters, who were both called Clodia. They took him secretly to the baths with them, buying the silence of the slave attendants for a few gold pieces. Clodius was treated like his sisters in their presence. Such were their pleasures before marriage.

The youngest married Lucullus, who took her to Asia where he was fighting in the wars against Mithridates. For husband, Clodia chose her cousin Metellus, a dull, honest man. In those spendthrift times he preserved a spirit frugal and dour, and Clodia could not abide his simple rusticity. She was just beginning to dream of new things for her dear Clodius when Cæsar's disapproval



came to dampen their pleasure, for Clodia guessed he might compel them to separate. To evade this she made Pomponius Atticus bring Cicero to see her. Hers was a tittering, flirtatious circle. Around her were found such men as Licinius Calvus; young Curion (nicknamed "Girly"); Sextius Clodius who followed the races; Ignatius and his band; and Catullus of Verona and Cælius Rufus who were both in love with her. While they recounted the latest scandals about Cæsar and Mamurra, Clodia's husband sat silent in his chair.

Elected proconsul, Metellus departed at once for Cisalpine Gaul, leaving Clodia in Rome with her sister-in-law, Murcia. Cicero was soon thoroughly charmed by Clodia's big blazing eyes. He dreamed of divorcing Terrentia, his wife, supposing Clodia would leave her husband and come to him in that event. But Terrentia discovered the design, promptly terrifying Cicero with her discovery and its possible consequences until he

dropped all association with Clodius and Clodia.

Meanwhile Clodius had busied himself making love to Pompeia, Cæsar's wife. On the night celebrating the divinity of their patron goddess, women only were permitted in Cæsar's house, for Cæsar was prætor and Pompeia alone offered the sacrifice. Disguised in the feminine garments of a zither player (just as his sister used to dress him) Clodius made his way to Pompeia, but a slave recognized him and Pompeia's mother gave the alarm. The scandal was soon public. Clodius attempted to defend himself by vowing he had spent the night with Cicero, but Terrentia forced her husband's denial and Cicero testified against Clodius.

Thereafter Clodius had no place among the nobles. Now past thirty, his sister was more ardent than ever. Clodius, she thought, might be adopted by some plebeian and so become a tribune of the people. Metellus,

now returned to Rome, saw through her schemes and mocked her with them. In these days when she had no Clodius, she let herself be loved by Catullus. Metellus seemed odious to her. Resolved to be rid of him, she met him one day as he returned from the senate, presenting him a cup to quench his thirst. Metellus drank and fell dead, and Clodia was free. Then she fled her husband's house, shutting herself up at once with Clodius on Mount Palatin, where the youngest sister came to join them after deserting her husband, Lucullus. They resumed their old manner of life, all three, and unleashed their spite.

When he turned plebeian Clodius was known almost from the first as a tribune of the people, for notwithstanding his feminine graces, he had a strong, penetrating voice. He obtained Cicero's exile, destroyed the statesman's house before his eyes and swore ruin and death to all his friends. Then serving as proconsul in Gaul, Cæsar was

powerless to interfere. Through Pompey, Cicero gained new influences during the following year, thus contriving to have himself recalled, whereupon the fury of the young commoner leaped to extremes. He first launched a violent attack against Cicero's friend, Milon, who was then hinting at ambitions for the consulate. Apostle of night, Clodius tried to murder Milon after overpowering his torchbearers, but the scandal of that scene marked the end of the young plebeian's popularity, for obscene songs about Clodius and Clodia were soon sung in the streets, while Cicero denounced them both in a violent discourse, comparing Clodia to Medea and Clymenestra. The rage of the brother and sister ended by consuming them. Clodius was killed in the dark by guardian slaves while attempting to burn Milon's house.

Clodia was desperate. She took and rejected Catullus, Cælius Rufus and Ignatius, but she loved only her brother Clodius.

It was for him she had poisoned her husband, for him she hired the incendiaries. When he died the object of her life vanished, though she remained beautiful and passionate. She had a country villa on the road to Ostia, a summer place with gardens on the Tiber, and another at Baja. In that last resort she sought refuge, endeavoring to find distraction through lascivious dancing with her women. But it was not enough. Her spirit was filled with the stupors of Clodius, whom she saw forever beardless and feminine. She recalled a time long ago when he had been captured by Sicilian pirates, and how they had used his soft body. She remembered a certain tavern where she had gone with him; how the doorway had been scribbled over with words written in charcoal, what a stench had come from the men who drank there, and how their chests were matted with hair.

Rome attracted her again. At early dusk she walked through the wide squares and

thoroughfares, the blazing insolence of her eyes unchanged. Nothing now appeased her though she tried all . . . even standing in the rain and sleeping in the mud. She bathed in the deep caverns where slaves gambled at dice. She was known in those cellars frequented by scullions and teamsters. She waited on the curb for any man who passed. She perished towards the morning of a suffocating night, after a strange return to a house that had once been her own. Sorry because he had given her so much as a quarter-as, a workman trapped her at dawn in an obscure alley, and strangled her to get his money back. He threw her body, with her large eyes still open into the yellow waters of the Tiber.

PETRONIUS

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*Romancer*





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## PETRONIUS

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HE was born in the days when green-garbed clowns used to sit around a fire roasting young pig; when bearded porters in cherry-colored tunics squatted by the gay mosaics at villa gates, shelling peas into silver platters; when rich freedmen played politics in the towns of Provence; when minstrels sang their epic poems to the desert; and when the Latin language was stuffed with redundant words and puffed-up names from Asia.

Among such elegances he passed his childhood. His garments of Tyrian wool were never worn a second time, and if a silver vessel chanced to fall from the table it was swept away with the rest of the débris. Delicate, unexpected viands were served at every meal, the cooks never ceas-

ing to vary the architecture of their dishes. To open an egg and find a fig in it was no cause for astonishment, nor was it unusual to slice a foie-gras statuette modeled in imitation of a Praxiteles. Plaster seals over the mouths of the wine amphoræ were brightly gilded. Phials of Indian ivory held ardent perfumes for convivial folk, while ewers, pierced in many intricate patterns and filled with colored waters, sent down a pretty shower as they swung gently to and fro. All the glasses were iridescent monstrosities. Urns there were with handles made to turn in the fingers so that the sides opened out, letting fall a spray of painted flowers. African birds with scarlet cheeks cackled from their golden cages. Dog-faced Egyptian monkeys chattered incessantly behind gold-incrusted grilles set into the sides of the rich walls, while scampering around in precious boxes were slim little scaly beasts with azure eyes.

Here Petronius lived, believing the very

air he breathed to be perfumed for his special use. When he arrived at the age of adolescence he did up his beard in an ornate sheath and began to look about him. Then a slave named Syrus, who had served in the arenas, showed him some things he had never seen before. Not of noble race, Petronius was a swarthy little squint-eyed fellow with the hands of an artisan and cultivated tastes. It pleased him to fashion words together and to write them down, though they resembled nothing the old poets had imagined, for they strove only to imitate the things Petronius found around him. Later he developed a grievous ambition for making verses.

Through Syrus he came to know barbarian gladiators, braggarts of the street corners, shifty-looking men of the market-places, curly-headed boys on whom the senators leaned during their promenades, curbstone orators, pimps with their upstart girls, fruit vendors, tavern landlords, shabby poets, pilfering servants, unauthorized

priestesses and vagabond soldiers. With his squint-eyes he saw them all, catching the precise manner of them and their ways. Syrus took him down to see the slaves in their baths, to the dens of the prostitutes and through those underground cells where the circus gladiators practiced with wooden swords. Sitting by the tombs beyond the city gates, he heard tales of men who change their skins—tales and stories passed from mouth to mouth by blacks and Syrians and innkeepers and guardians who carried out the crucifixions. Absorbed in these vivid contrasts which his free life allowed him to examine, he began, when about thirty, to write the story of those errant slaves and debauchees he knew. In the luxurious society of the city he recognized their morals, though transformed, and he found their ideas and their language among the polite conversations at high ceremonies. Alone, bent over his parchment at a table of odorous cedar, with the sharp point of his calm

detachment he pictured the adventures of an ignored people. Under the painted ebony wainscoting, by the light of his tall windows, he imagined smoky torch-lit taverns, absurd nocturnal struggles, the twisted candelabras of carved wood, the locks suddenly forced by the axes of police slaves, and the harsh commands of slave drivers shrill above the shuffling rush of miserable people clad in torn curtains and filthy rags.

When his six books were finished Petronius read them to Syrus. And the slave is said to have howled his laughter aloud and clapped his hands for glee. At that moment they conceived the notion of putting those adventures into practice. Tacitus has falsely written that Petronius was present at Nero's court, telling how his death was brought about by the jealousy of Tigellinus. But Petronius did not vanish murmuring lewd little verses as he stepped delicately into a marble bath. He ran away with Syrus to end his life on the roads.

His appearance made disguise easy. Turn by turn, he and Syrus carried the leather sack containing their money and clothing. They slept in the open air, on hillocks beside the crossroads, often watching the dismal cemetery lamps twinkling among the tombs. They ate their bread sour and their olives rancid. They became wandering magicians, vagabond fakirs, companions of runaway soldiers. Petronius dropped his writing completely, for he now lived the life he had once imagined. They had treacherous friends whom they cared for, he and Syrus, and who left them at the gates of towns after borrowing their last coin. They carried on all sorts of debauches with escaped gladiators: they became barbers and scrub-men. For several months they lived on crusts stolen from the graves of the dead, and all who saw Petronius were terrified by his wry eye and the swart cast of him. One night he disappeared. Syrus expected to find him in a dirty hovel where he had



been with a tangle-haired girl, but a drunken squatter had sunk a knife in his neck while they were lying together on the floor of an abandoned cave in the open country.



S U F R A H

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*Geomancer*



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## *SUFRAH*

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THE story of Aladdin is in error when it tells how the African magician was poisoned in his palace and how his body, burned black by the drug, was thrown to the dogs and cats. His brother was so deceived by these appearances that he stabbed himself after donning the robes of the blessed Fatima, but it is nevertheless certain that Moghrabi Sufrah (for that was the magician's name) only slept under the influence of the powerful narcotic. He escaped through one of the twenty-four windows of the great hall while Aladdin was tenderly embracing the princess.

Hardly had he reached the ground after sliding down easily enough by one of the golden drain pipes to the terrace, when the palace disappeared completely, leaving Sufrah alone on the open desert. Nothing re-

mained, not even one of the bottles of African wine for which he had gone to the cave at the command of the treacherous princess. Desperate, he sat down under the fierce sun, knowing well how infinite was the torrid expanse of sand in every direction, so he wrapped his head in his cape, waiting for death. Not one magic charm was left to him, no spell-casting perfumes, nor even a dancing ring with which he might have sought some hidden source of water to quench his thirst. Night came on blue and hot, but it relieved the inflammation in his eyes a little, then he decided to trace one magic figure on the sand to learn if he were destined to perish so, lost in the desert. He drew the four main lines with his finger, set out the points for the invocation of Fire, Water, Earth and Air, then for the Equator, the Orient, the Occident and the Septentrion. At the end he collected all the points, odd and even, arriving finally at the first figure. To his joy he saw it was For-

tune Major. And he knew then that his escape was certain.

Now the first figure must be placed in the first house of astrology, the house of the Geomancer. In that house, called the House of Heaven, Sufrah found again the figure of Fortune Major pronouncing success and glory to his ventures. But in the eighth house, the House of Death, he came upon the figure of the Red One, messenger of blood, fire and omen sinister. When Sufrah had conjured the figures of the twelve houses he took two proofs and from these proofs one judgment, thus testing well the accuracy of his calculations. The Prison was the figure in the Judgment, so Sufrah knew by that he would find glory at great peril in some shut and secret place.

Since he was not to die, the magician meditated now in confidence. The lamp had been transported to the very center of China with the rest of the palace. He could not hope to retrieve it. He recalled the fact



that he had never discovered the identity of the lamp's first master, who was also the owner of the treasure and of the garden of precious fruits. On the sand he traced a second figure, reading it by the letters of the alphabet. First the characters S.L.M.N. were revealed, and when the tenth figure confirmed them Sufrah knew at once that the magical lamp had been part of King Solomon's treasure. He continued to study all the signs attentively until the Dragon's Head gave him the information he sought, for it was joined by the figure of The Boy, emblem of riches hidden in the earth, and by the figure of The Prison, where the position of any hiding place may be deciphered.

Sufrah clapped his hands for happiness. Now the geomancy showed King Solomon buried under those very sands of Africa, while on his finger was the all-powerful signet ring that gives immortality to its wearer. So King Solomon slept on as he had slept through the myriad ages.

Sufrah waited eagerly for the dawn. In the blue half-light he saw Bedouins riding by. When he hailed them they pitied his distress, giving him a little sack of dates and a gourd of water. He started then on foot, traveling steadily until he came to an arid stony place between four bare cliffs stretching like fingers toward the four corners of the heavens. There he drew a circle and pronounced certain words; the earth trembled, opened, showed a marble slab with a bronze ring in it, and Sufrah seized the ring, calling out three times in Solomon's name. As the stone swung from its place Sufrah went down a stair into the earth.

Two fiery dogs bounded from niches opposite him, spitting tongues of flame as they sprang, but Sufrah had only to say the magic name again to make them disappear. He found an iron door, it turned silently at his touch and he passed through it into a deep corridor carved out of living porphyry. An eternal glow was there, emitting from num-

berless seven-branched candelabras, while at the end of the long corridor Sufrah saw a room with jasper walls. A golden brazier burned richly in the center. On a couch, hewn like a block of frozen fire out of one single diamond, stretched the form of an old, white-bearded man who wore a crown. Near the King stood a mummy, her thin hands still graciously extended, though the warmth of her kisses was long gone. And on the fallen hand of the King Sufrah beheld the great shining seal.

He crawled to it on his knees, raised the shriveled fingers and snatched off the precious seal.

So were the predictions of the unknown Geomancer fulfilled and the immortal sleep of Solomon brought to end. In less than a moment the King's body crumbled to a little handful of dust and bones, which the gracious form of the mummy seemed still to watch over.

Crushed at that same instant by the Red

One from the House of Death, Sufrah spent all the blood of his life in one vermilion gush before the deep sleep of earthly immortality swallowed him up. With Solomon's ring on his finger, he laid him down on the diamond couch to be preserved from corruption during the myriad years, in that shut and secret place disclosed to him by the figure of The Prison. The iron door of the porphyry corridor fell closed as the fiery dogs took up their guard over the immortal Geomancer.



FRA DOLCINO

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*Heretic*





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## *FRA DOLCINO*

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HE first learned of holy things in the church of San-Michele at Orte, when his mother held him so his little hands might touch the pretty wax figures hanging before the Virgin. His parents' house adjoined the baptistry. Three times a day, at dawn, at noon and at nightfall, he saw two Franciscan monks go by begging bread for their basket, and often he followed them to the convent door. One of these two was very old, having been ordained by Saint Francis himself, so he said. He promised to teach Dolcino the language of the birds and how to talk with all the beasts of the fields. Soon Dolcino spent his days in the convent, adding his fresh young voice to the songs of the brethren. When the bell called them to work he would help wash their greens and vegetables around a big bucket. Robert, the

cook, loaned him an old knife to scrape the bowls. Dolcino liked to visit the refectory; he loved to see the fine lamp they had there, and the painted shade with its pictures of the Twelve Apostles in wooden sandals and little capes that fell over their shoulders.

But to go to begging from door to door with the monks was his greatest pleasure. On such occasions he was permitted to carry their napkin-covered basket while they asked for bread. The sun was high in the sky as they walked along one day after several poor houses along the river bank had refused them. The heat was intense, and the two friars were hungry and very thirsty when they entered a courtyard they had never visited before. Dolcino exclaimed in surprise as he set the basket down, for this place was all tapestried with fresh green vines and transparent verdure. Leopards and other strange beasts from across the sea were romping together, while youths and girls in gay clothing made sweet music on

pipes and with zithers. A deep tranquillity pervaded the cool and odorous shade. Singers were singing strange songs to which the others listened in silence. The monks uttered not a word. Their hunger and their thirst were sated. They no longer wanted for anything. They decided at last to go, but when they reached the river bank not a sign of the entrance to the mysterious court remained behind them. The opening in the wall had vanished. Until Dolcino found the basket they believed it had all been a vision or a necromancy. But there lay the basket filled with bread—bread so white that Jesus Himself might have given it out of His own hands.

Thus was the miracle of begging revealed to Dolcino. He took no holy orders after that, having conceived a stranger, loftier ideal. The brethren carried him over the roads of Italy from one convent to another, from Bologna to Modena, to Parma, to Cremona, to Pistoja and to Lucques. At

Pisa he had his great revelation of the true faith. As he slept one night atop the wall of the Episcopal palace, he was awakened by the sound of a drum. A host of children carrying lighted tapers were circling around a savage man who blew on a brazen trumpet. Dolcino believed this man he saw must be John the Divine, for he wore a long black beard and a rough haircloth garment marked from collar to hem with a large red cross. The pelt of a wild beast was around his waist. In a loud, terrible voice he exclaimed: "*Laudato et benedetto et glorificato sio lo Patre,*" and all the children repeated his words. Then he cried "*sia lo Fijo*" and the children repeated that. When he chanted "*sia lo Spiritu Sancto*" they said the words after him. Together they ended with the cry: "*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*" and after a huge blast of his trumpet he began to preach. His words were harsh as mountain wine but they held Dolcino, most of all, when the man in haircloth thumped the

drum. Admiration and envy filled Dolcino's soul. This man was ignorant and violent—he knew no Latin (he pronounced the penitence “penitenza”) but he repeated sinister predictions of Merlin and Sibyl and Joachim of Floris, all in the Book of Figures. He prophesied the Anti-Christ in the person of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa whose ruin would be complete until the seven orders were taken from him according to the Writings. Dolcino followed the strange man all the way to Parma where the full understanding came to him.

The announcer shall proceed the founder of the seven orders, Dolcino was given to know. So there at Parma, on the ancient stone from which the magistrates addressed the people, he proclaimed his new faith. Its followers must dress, he said, with little white capes over their shoulders like the apostles on the lamp-shade in the refectory of the Franciscans. Baptism was not enough, he declared. True believers must

return to the complete innocence of children. He made a cradle and got in it, calling for the breast of some pious woman who cried with pity. To test his chastity he persuaded a woman to have her daughter come naked to his bed. He begged a sack of money, distributing it among the poor, to thieves and to women of the streets. Work must cease, he cried, for all could live like the beasts of the fields. Robert, the convent cook, ran away to follow Dolcino, feeding his new leader out of a bowl stolen from the poor brethren. Folk believed the days of Gerardino Secarelli, the mad vagabond, and his Chevaliers of Jesus, had come back out of the past. Blissfully they followed Dolcino, murmuring: "Father, father, father!"

The monks of Parma finally drove him out of the city. Margherita, a girl of noble family, ran down the road after him, joining him on his march to Plaisance. He caught up a sack marked with the red cross and threw it over her and took her with him.



Swineherds and drovers saw them sleeping in the fields. Many left their flocks to follow. Captive women whom the men of Cremona had cruelly mutilated by cutting off their noses, implored them and came with them, hiding their faces behind white shrouds. Margherita instructed them in the new faith. On a wooded mountain not far from Novara they established themselves for a communal life, though Dolcino set up neither rule nor order: according to his doctrines all would be found in charity. Those who wished fed on berries and herbs. Others begged in the towns and some stole cattle. The life of Dolcino and Margherita was free under the sky, but the people of Novara could not understand. When the peasants complained of thieving and scandal soldiery was sent to clear the mountain and the apostles were driven away. As for Dolcino and Margherita, they were tied to the back of an ass, facing tailward, and led into Novara where they were burned in the market place,



both on the same pyre by order of the law. Dolcino made only one request. He asked that they should not be stripped, but burned in their white mantles, like the apostles on the lamp-shade in the refectory of the Franciscans.

CECCO ANGIOLIERI

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*Poet of Hate*



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## *CECCO ANGIOLIERI*

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CECCO ANGIOLIERI was born hateful. His birth at Sienna coincided to the very day with the birth of Dante Alaghieri at Florence. Cecco's father was a rich wool merchant whose sympathies inclined toward the empire. From his earliest childhood the boy muttered scornful, jealous things against his sire. In those days many of the nobles had reached a point where they were no longer willing to serve the Pope, the Ghibelines having already rebelled while even the Guelphes were divided into factions designated as the Whites and the Blacks. Imperial intervention was not distasteful to the Whites, but the Blacks remained staunchly loyal to Rome and the Holy See. Cecco felt instinctively Black, perhaps because his father was a White.

He hated his father almost from the first

breath he drew. When he was fifteen he called for his share of the family fortune just as if old Angiolieri were dead. At the refusal of this request he left the paternal house in a furious wrath, complaining of his wrongs to high heaven and all the world, as he walked the roads to Florence where the Whites were again in power after routing the Ghibellines. Cecco begged bread, told of his father's cruelty, and settled down finally in a cobbler's hut. The cobbler had a daughter named Becchina with whom Cecco at once considered himself in love.

He was a simple man, this cobbler, a constant worshiper of the Virgin, whose image he always wore, persuaded that his devotion gave him the right to mend boots with bad leather. Evenings before bedtime, he would sit with Cecco in the candlelight, chatting about the saints and their goodness while Becchina washed the dishes, her hair in an everlasting tangle as she made fun of Cecco for the crooked mouth he had.

About that time all Florence began to talk of Dante's wild love for Beatrice, daughter of Folco Ricovero de Portinari, lettered folk having discovered the secret in the songs the poet wrote to his lady. Cecco heard these songs and scoffed at them.

"Oh, Cecco," said Becchina, "you mock Dante but you cannot write such pretty verses for me."

"We shall see," replied young Angiolieri with a sneer. First he set about composing a sonnet in which he criticized the measure and the sentiment of Dante's songs. Then he wrote his verses to Becchina. She could not read a word of them, but she shrieked with laughter at the amorous contortions of his mouth when he read them to her.

Poor and bare as a stone in a church, Cecco loved the Mother of God with a true fervor that won the cobbler's heart. Together they yearned for shabby sacred relics peddled by the bankrupt Blacks. Fired as he was with ardent devotion, Cecco looked

like a promising customer at first, but he had no money. And in spite of Cecco's admirable piety the cobbler betrothed his daughter to a fat neighbor named Barberino, a vender of oils. "Holy oils, perhaps," explained the cobbler by way of excuse to Cecco. The wedding took place about the same time Beatrice married Simone de Bardi, and Cecco imitated Dante's woe.

But Becchina did not pine away and die. On June the ninth, 1291, Dante sat idly tracing a picture on a tablet. It was the first anniversary of the death of Beatrice. Gazing at the tablet the poet saw he had drawn the figure of an angel whose face resembled his beloved. On June the twentieth, eleven days later (Barberino being busy among his vats), Cecco Angiolieri obtained from Becchina the favor of a kiss on the mouth—and wrote a burning sonnet.

Hatred sat undiminished in his heart, for now he wanted money with his love and he could not get it from the money-lenders.



Hoping to wheedle some from his father, he departed for Sienna. Old Angiolieri refused him even so much as a glass of sour wine, leaving him perched on the road in front of the house.

While in his father's rooms Cecco had seen a sack full of new-struck florins, revenue from their estates in Montegiovi and Arcidosso. Here was he, perishing of thirst and hunger, his clothes in tatters, his shirt dripping! Back he tramped to Florence, arriving so completely worn and disreputable that Barberino put him out of his shop for his raggedness.

So Cecco returned that night to the hut of the cobbler whom he found sitting in the candlelight singing a docile song to the Virgin Mary.

They wept and embraced and Cecco told the cobbler how desperately he hated his father—that old man who threatened to live as long as Botadeo the Wandering Jew. A friar who came for alms persuaded Cecco to

await his deliverance in the monastic state, so young Angiolieri followed the pious man to the abbey where they gave him a cell and an old robe, and the prior named him Fra Henri. In the choir at evensong he would touch the bare stones under him, as cold and grim as himself. Rage choked him when he thought of his father's wealth. It seemed to him as if the sea would surely go dry before that old man died. There were moments when he even envied the kitchen scullions.

At other times he indulged his pride grandly. "If I were fire," he thought, "I would burn up the world. Were I the wind I'd smother it with hurricanes. If I were water I'd drown it in a deluge; were I God I'd hurl it into space. If I were the Pope there would be no more peace under the sun; were I the Emperor I'd cut off heads all around. If I were Death I'd find my father, and were I Cecco. . . . No, there is all my wish!" But he was only Fra Henri.

Then he remembered his other hate. Procuring a copy of Dante's songs to Beatrice he compared them diligently to his own verses written for Becchina. When a wandering monk told him how Dante had spoken of him disdainfully he set about searching for some revenge. To him the superiority of his sonnets appeared most evident. The songs to *Bice* (he gave her that vulgar name) were abstract and white while his songs were strong and colorful. First he sent his insulting verses to Dante, then imagined himself denouncing that poet before the good King Charles, Count of Provence. Finally, when neither letters nor poems consoled him, he threw off his holy garb, put on his old shirt, his worn jacket and weatherbeaten cape and left the monastery, returning to Florence and the Black cause.

A great joy awaited him there. Dante was exiled and only a few of the great poet's followers were left. Cecco found the cobbler

whispering humbly to the Virgin of the next Black triumph and young Angiolieri forgot Becchina in his gratification. Eating dry crusts, he walked the streets all day or ran behind the Church messengers on their way to or from Rome. When the violent Black chief, Corso Donati, became a power in Florence he employed Cecco among others. On the night of June the tenth a mob of cooks, blacksmiths, friars and beggars invaded the aristocratic section of the city where the fine palaces of the Whites were. While the cobbler followed at a distance, admiring the holy sight, Cecco brandished a torch. They burned all. Cecco himself set fire to the wooden balconies on the palace of the Cavalcanti, who had been Dante's friends. That night he fed his hate with fire and the next day sent his insulting verses to Dante "the Lombard" at the court of Verona where he had taken refuge. During the same day he became at last the Cecco

of his heart's desire. Old as Eli or Enoch, his father finally died.

Speeding to Sienna Cecco threw open the coffers, plunging his hands deep into bags of new-struck florins, repeating a hundred times over now he was no more Fra Henri but Lord of Arcidosso and Montegiovi, richer than Dante and a better poet. Then the sin of having desired his father's death beset him so he repented. There in the fields he scribbled a sonnet demanding a Pope's crusade against all who should henceforth insult their parents so. Eager for confession, he returned in haste to Florence and besought the cobbler to intercede in his behalf with the Virgin.

From a dealer in holy waxes he bought a tall taper which the cobbler lighted unctuously. Together they wept over their prayers to Their Lady. Until a very late hour the voice of the cobbler was heard singing songs of praise and rejoicing in his fine candle, as he wiped away his friend's tears.



PAOLO UCCELLO

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*Painter*





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## PAOLO UCCELLO

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HIS real name was Paolo di Dono, but the Florentines called him Uccelli or Paul of the Birds because of the many bird figures and painted beasts in his house, for he was too poor to feed live animals or to obtain those strange species he did not know. At Padua he was said to have executed a fresco of the four elements, with an image of a chameleon representing the air. He had never seen one, so he made it a sort of pot-bellied camel with a gaping snout (while the chameleon, explains Vasari, resembles a small dry lizard and the camel is a great humped beast). Uccello was not concerned with the reality of things but in their multiplicity and the infinity of their lines. He made fields blue, cities red, and cavaliers in black armor on ebony horses with blazing mouths, the lances of the riders radiating

toward every quarter of the heavens. He had a fancy for drawing the mazocchio, a headdress made of wooden hoops so covered that the cloth fell down in pleats all about the wearer's face. Uccello drew pointed ones and square ones and others in pyramids and cones, following every intricacy of their perspectives so studiously as to find a world of combinations in their folds. The sculptor Donatello used to say to him: "Ah, Paolo, you leave the substance for the shadow."

The Bird continued his patient work, assembling circles, dividing angles, examining all creatures under all their aspects. From his friend Giovanni Manetti, the mathematician, he learned of the problems of Euclid, then shut himself up to cover panels and parchments with points and curves. Aided by Filippo Brunelleschi, he perpetually employed himself at the study of architecture, but he had no intention to build. He wanted only to know the directions of lines from foundation to cornice, the

convergences of parallels together with their intersections, the manner in which vaulting turns upon its keys and the perspective of ceiling beams as they appear to unite at the ends of long rooms. He drew all beasts, all their movements and all the gestures of men, reducing these things to simple lines.

Then like an alchemist who mixes ores and metals in his furnace, watching their fusion in hope of finding the secret of gold, Uccello would throw all his forms into a crucible, mix them, mingle them and melt them, striving to transmute them into one ideal form containing all. That was why Paolo Uccello lived like an alchemist at the back of his little house. He believed he might find the knowledge to merge all lines into a single aspect; he wanted to see the universe as it should be reflected in the eye of God, all figures springing from one complex center. Near him lived Ghiberti, della Robbia, Brunelleschi and Donatello, each one proud and a master of his art. They railed at poor

Uccello for his folly of perspectives, with his house full of cobwebs—empty of provisions. But Uccello was prouder than they. At each new combination of lines he imagined he had discovered the way. It was not imitation he sought, but the sovereign power to create all things, and his strange drawings of pleated hats were to him more revealing than magnificent marble figures by the great Donatello.

That was how The Bird lived: like a hermit, with his musing head wrapped in his cape, noting neither what he ate nor what he drank.

One day along a meadow, near a ring of old stones deep in the grass, he saw a laughing girl with a garland on her head. She wore a thin dress held to her hips by a pale ribbon and her movements were supple as the reeds she gathered. Her name was Selvaggia. She smiled at Uccello. Noting the flexion of her smile when she looked at him, he saw the little lines of her lashes, the pat-

terned circles of the iris, the curve of her lids and all the minute interlacements of her hair. Considering the garland across her forehead, he described it to himself in a multitude of geometric postures, but Selvaggia knew nothing of all that for she was only thirteen. She took Uccello by the hand and he loved her. She was the daughter of a Florentine dyer, her mother was dead and another woman had come to her father's house and had beaten her. Uccello took her home with him.

Selvaggia used to kneel all day by the wall whereon Uccello traced his universal forms. She never understood why he preferred to regard those straight and arched lines instead of the tender face she raised to him. At night, when Manetti or Brunelleschi came to work with Uccello she would sleep at the foot of the scaffolding, in the circle of shadow beyond the lamplight. In the morning she arose before him, rejoicing because she was surrounded by painted birds

and colored beasts. Uccello drew her lips, her eyes, her hair, her hands; he recorded all the attitudes of her body but he never made her portrait as did other painters when they loved a woman. For The Bird had no pleasure imitating individuals. He never dwelt in the one place—he tried to soar over all places in his flight. So Selvaggia's forms were tossed into his crucible along with the movements of beasts, the lines of plants and stones, rays of light, billowings of clouds above the earth and the rippling of sea waves. Without thought for the girl, he lived in eternal meditation upon his crucible of forms.

There came a time when nothing remained to eat in Uccello's house. Selvaggia did not speak of this to Donatello or the others; she kept her silence and died. Uccello drew the stiffening lines of her body, the union of her thin little hands, her closed eyes. He no more realized she was dead than he had



ever realized she was alive. But he threw these new forms among all the others he had gathered.

The Bird grew old. His pictures were no longer understood by men, who recognized in them neither earth nor plant nor animal, seeing only a confusion of curves. For many years he had been working on his supreme masterpiece which he hid from all eyes. It was to embrace all his research and all the images he had ever conceived. The subject was Saint Thomas, incredulous, tempting the wrath of Christ. Uccello completed this work when he was eighty. Calling Donatello to his house he uncovered it piously before him and Donatello said: "Oh, Paolo, cover your picture!" Though The Bird questioned him, the great sculptor would say no more, then Uccello knew he had accomplished a miracle. But Donatello had seen only a mass of lines.

A few years later they found Paolo Uccello dead in his bed, worn out with age.

His face was covered with wrinkles, his eyes fixed on some mysterious revelation. Tight in his rigid hand he clutched a little parchment disc on which a network of lines ran from the center to the circumference and returned from the circumference to the center.

NICOLAS LOYSELEUR

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*Judge*



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## NICOLAS LOYSELEUR

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BORN on Ascension Day, he was dedicated to the Virgin, whose aid he invoked at all times during his life until he could not hear her name without his eyes would fill with tears. He was first schooled by a lean man in a little loft on the rue Saint-Jacques, where, after learning his psalms, donats and penitences with three other children, he laboriously acquired the logic of Okam. He soon became bachelor and master of the arts, for the venerable instructors found his gentle nature charmingly unctuous, as sweet words of adoration slipped easily from his fat lips. No sooner had he obtained his baccalaureate than the Church had its eye on him. He served first in the diocese of the Bishop of Beauvais who recognized his talent, using it to inform the English before Chartres how certain French captains were deploying.

When he was about thirty-five years old they made him a canon of the Cathedral of Rouen, where he struck up a friendship with another canon and chorister, Jean Bruillot, with whom he psalmed fine litanies in honor of Mary.

Now and again he saw fit to remonstrate with Nicole Coppequesne, one of the monks of his chapel, taking that brother gently to task for his unseemly devotion to Saint Anastasia. Transported at the thought of a clever girl so beguiling a Roman magistrate, Nicole Coppequesne had a habit of carrying his ecstasies to the kitchen, flinging himself upon the pots and pans until his ardent embraces left him black in the face and smudgy as a demon. But Nicolas Loyseleur showed Nicole Coppequesne how much brighter was the power and the glory of Mary when she chose to resuscitate a drowned friar—a lewd friar surely, whose only salvation lay in his reverence to the Virgin. One night as Nicole Coppequesne

left his cell bent on celebrating one of his odious kitchen orgies, his course led him past the altar of the Blessed Lady, where he paused perforce in pious genuflection. And that night his lubricity was drowned in the river. The evil spirits who threw him in did not return to rescue him, but when the monks hauled his body out of the water the following day he opened his eyes after a time, revived by the grace of Mary. "Ah, what a choice remedy is such devotion!" breathed canon Nicolas Loyseleur. "How venerable, Coppequesne, and how discreet. Surely from this day you will renounce your Anastasia!"

When the Bishop of Beauvais opened the process against Jeanne la Lorraine at Rouen the graceful persuasiveness of Nicolas Loyseleur was not forgotten. Dressed as a layman, his shaven pate covered by a hood, Nicolas entered the small circular cell under the staircase where the prisoner was confined.



"Jeannette," he began, drawing back well into the shadows, "Sainte Katherine has sent me to you, Jeannette."

"And you," said Jeanne, "in God's name who are you?"

"I am a poor cobbler from Greu," Nicolas replied. "Alas for our unhappy country! The 'Godons' have taken me, too, my girl. I know you well, Jeanne. How many, many times have I seen you kneeling before the Holy Mother of God in the Church of Sainte-Marie of Bermont! I have often sat there with you while our good curé, Guillaume Front, has said the mass. Do you remember Jean Moreau and Jean Barre of Neufchâteau, Jeanne? They were my comrades."

Jeanne wept.

"Trust me, Jeannette," urged Nicolas. "They made me a priest years ago. See? See my shaven head? Confess yourself to me, my child. Confess freely. Our gracious King Charles is my friend."

"I will confess to you gladly," said Jeanne.

A small hole had been secretly cut in the wall beforehand. Outside the cell Guillaume Manchon and Bois-Guillaume prepared to write down the confession as Nicolas Loyseleur whispered:

"Jeannette, tell me the truth. Tell me all . . . the English will not dare to harm you."

On the following day Jeanne was taken before her judges. Hidden by a thick serge curtain Nicolas Loyseleur sat with a notary in the hollow of a casement window. The notary was there to elaborate all charges against Jeanne in the record, and to leave her answers blank. When Nicolas appeared in the open court he made a little sign to prevent her from showing her surprise. Then he assisted the severe examination.

On the ninth of May, in the main tower of the Château, he declared that the need for torture was urgent.

On May the twelfth all the judges assembled with the Bishop of Beauvais to decide if Jeanne should be tortured. Guillaume Erart thought it unnecessary. Enough material had been obtained without that measure, he said. In Master Nicolas Loyseleur's opinion it would be well to torture her for the good of her soul, but his advice was not followed.

On the twenty-fourth of May they led her to the cemetery of Saint-Ouen, where they tied her to a scaffold with her feet on a pile of faggots. While Guillaume Erart prayed, Nicolas Loyseleur was close beside her, whispering in her ear. Menaced by the fire, she grew deathly white as Nicolas caught her in his arms and with a quick glance at the judges, cried out: "She will confess." When she passed him again at the low door of the prison he kissed her fingers.

"Please God, Jeannette," he said, "this day has been well for you. Your soul has been saved, Jeanne. Only trust me and you

shall be free. Resume the modest garments of your proper sex. Do as you are told else you are still in danger. Obey me, Jeanne, and you shall be saved. You are a good girl; there is no evil in you. But you are in the power of the Church. You must remember that."

After dinner he visited her in her new prison, an apartment in the Château, reached by eight stairs. Nicolas sat down on the bed to which a heavy block was fastened by an iron chain.

"My Jeannette," he began, "God and Our Lady have been merciful to you this day, for they have shown you the grace and mercy of our Holy Mother the Church. When the judges and holy men command you must obey humbly. You must give up your old ideas or the Church will abandon you forever. See, Jeanne—here are honest garments of a modest girl. Be quick to shear those boyish locks."

Four days later Nicolas returned while

Jeanne was asleep and stole the skirt and smock he had given her. When they told him she was again in man's clothing he exclaimed:

"Alas, I fear she's sunk too deep in evil."

And to the Archbishop in his chapel he repeated the words of Doctor Gilles of Duremort:

"We, her judges, have but to declare Jeanne d'Arc a heretic, abandoning her to secular justice; praying they shall deal with her leniently."

Before they led Jeanne to the stake Nicolas reached her side with Jean Toutmouille.

"Oh, Jeannette," he pled, "hide the truth no longer for now you must think only of your soul's salvation. Trust me, my child! Here, before all eyes, you must go down on your knees in public confession. Public, Jeanne! Humble and public . . . for the good of your soul."

Jeanne begged his help, fearing her courage there before the mob.

He stayed to see her burn. It was then he manifested his devotion to the Virgin so visibly. When Jeanne began to scream out in the name of Mary, Nicolas wept hot tears, strongly moved as he was at the very sound of Our Lady's name. The English soldiers thought he cried out of pity for Jeanne, so they struck him and threatened him with their swords. If the Count of Warwick had not protected him they would have cut his throat then and there. As it was he mounted one of the Count's horses and rode away.

For many long days he wandered over the roads of France, avoiding Normandy and the king's men. Finally he reached Bale. Standing on a wooden bridge between tall pointed houses with blue and yellow turrets, roofed with arched, striated tiles, he was suddenly dazzled by the glare of the Rhine. He saw himself drowning like the lewd friar, Nicole Coppequesne, in the green water whirling before his eyes, and Mary's name choked in his throat as he died with a sob.





KATHERINE THE LACEMAKER

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*Girl of the Streets*



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## KATHERINE THE LACEMAKER

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SHE was born about the middle of the fifteenth century, in the rue de la Parcheminerie near the rue Saint-Jacques, during a winter so cold that wolves ran over Paris on the snow. An old woman with a red nose under her hood took Katherine in and brought her up. At first she played in the doorways with Perrenette, Guillemette, Ysabeau and Jehanneton, who wore little petticoats and gathered icicles, chilling their small red fists in the icy gutters. They would watch the neighborhood boys whistle at passers-by from the tables of the Saint-Merry tavern. Under open sheds they saw buckets of tripe, long fat sausages and big iron hooks from which the butchers hung quarters of meat near Saint-Benoit le Betourne, where the scriveners lived. They heard the scratching of quills in little shops,

and in the evening saw clerks snuff out their flickering candles. At Petit-Pont they mocked the sidewalk orators, then scampered away to hide among the angles of the rue des Trois-Portes. After that they would sit together along the fountain's curb and chatter until nightfall.

So Katherine passed her first youth, before the old woman taught her to sit in front of a lacemaker's cushion, patiently crossing the threads from the bobbins. Later on she worked at that trade. Jehan-neton became a capemaker, Perrenette a washerwoman, while Ysabeau made gloves and Guillemette, happiest of all, was a sausage-maker, with her little face crimson and shining as if it had been rubbed in fresh pork blood. For the boys who played at the Saint-Merry new enterprises began. Some went to study on Mount Sainte Genevieve, some drove carts to Trou-Perrette, some clinked goblets of Aunis at the Pomme de Pin, others quarreled at the Hotel de la

Grosse Margot. At noon they were seen in the tavern entrance on the rue aux Feves; at midnight they left by the other door on the rue aux Juifs. As for Katherine, she continued to interwork the threads of her lace. On summer evenings she found it pleasant sitting on the church steps where they let her laugh and gossip.

Katherine wore an unbleached dress with a green jacket over it. Absorbed in the problems of clothes, she hated nothing so much as the padded garments worn by girls not of noble birth. She was fond of money—equally fond of the silver testons or ten sou pieces, the blancs, and above all of the golden ecus. That was how she made the acquaintance of Casin Cholet, sergeant of the yard at Chatelet, one evening in the shadow of his little office. Casin was poorly paid. Katherine often had supper with him at the Hotel de la Mule, opposite the Church des Mathurins, and after supping Casin would go out to steal chickens around the

moats and ditches of Paris, bringing them back under the folds of his wide tabard, selling them very fairly to Machecroue, widow of Arnoul, who kept the poultry shop at the Petit-Chatelet gate.

Soon Katherine gave up her lacemaking, for the old woman with the red nose was now rotting her bones in the Cemetery des Innocents, and Casin Cholet had found his little friend a basement room near Trois-Pucelles, where he came to her late at night. He did not care if she showed herself at the window, her eyes blackened with charcoal, her cheeks smeared with white lead—he never forbade it; and all the pots, cups and dishes offered by Katherine to those who paid well, were stolen by Casin from various inns—from the Chaire, the Cynges or from the Hotel du Plat d'Etain. The day he pawned Katherine's belted dress at the Trois-Lavandieres Casin Cholet disappeared. His friends told her he had been caught snooping in the bottom of a cart,

that he had been soundly beaten and driven out of Paris by the Baudoyer gate at the order of the provost. She never saw him again. Having no heart to earn her living alone, she became a girl of the streets, dwelling wherever she could.

At first she waited by the tavern doors, and those who knew her took her behind walls, under the Chatelet or around by the College of Navarre. When it grew too cold for this, a complaisant old woman let her come into a bath-house where the madame gave her shelter. She lived there in a stone room strewn with green rushes, and they let her keep her name, Katherine the Lace-maker, though she made no more lace. Sometimes they gave her liberty to walk through the streets if she promised to return by the hour the men were accustomed to arrive, then Katherine would go peering into the glove shops and the lace shops, but most of all she envied the red face of the little sausage-maker, laughing among her chunks



of pork. Afterwards she would go back to the house, which the madame lighted at dusk with candles that melted and dripped thickly behind black panes.

Finally Katherine grew tired of living shut up in a square room. She ran away to the roads. From that time on she was no longer Parisienne or lacemaker, but one of those women who haunt the outskirts of French towns, waiting by cemetery walls for any man who passes. These women know no names but those which suit their faces, and they called Katherine "The Snout." She tramped the fields, where her white face was often seen peeping between the mulberry trees or over the hedges. Evenings, she sat by the roadside, and she learned to control her fear of the dark in the midst of the dead, while her feet shivered against the stone-marked graves. No more white money, no more silver testons, no golden ecus; Katherine lived thinly now on

bread, cheese and a jug of water. She had vagabond friends who cried, "Snout! Snout!" at her from afar—and she loved them.

The chapel bells were her greatest loss, for The Snout would remember June nights when she had spread her green jacket out on the church steps. Those were the days when she had so envied young ladies in their gay dresses. But now there remained to her neither cape nor jacket. Bareheaded, she crouched on the stones waiting for her bread. In the thick shadows of the cemeteries she regretted those red candles at the house with the square room, and the green rushes underfoot, instead of black mud sticking to her boots.

One night a tramp came along dressed up like a soldier. He cut The Snout's throat to get her purse, but he found no money in it.



ALAIN THE GENTLE

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*Soldier*



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## ALAIN THE GENTLE

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FROM the age of twelve he served Charles VII as an archer, for he was brought up by men-at-arms in the flat country of Normandy and the circumstance of his adoption was the following. When the armies came through that region, burning barns, skinning the legs of peasants with their sheath-knives and flinging young girls down broken on their beds, Alain was hid in an empty cask at the door of a wine press, and when the soldiers tumbled the cask upside down they found him. They carried him away just as he was, in his shirt and his perky petticoat, to the captain of the troop, who gave him a little leather jacket and a cape that had been through the battle of Saint-Jacques. Perrin Godin taught him how to draw a bow and how to gamble at cards. In this company he passed through Bordeaux, Angou-

lême and Poitou to Bourges; saw Saint-Pourcain where the king sat beyond the marches of Lorrain; visited Toul; returned to Picardy; entered Flanders; crossed Saint-Quentin and turned again toward Normandy. During his twenty-three years of military travel he met the Englishman, Jehan Poule-Cras, from whom he learned British curses; Chiquerello the Lombard, who instructed him in the cure of Saint-Anthony's fire; and young Ydre de Laon, who taught him how to pull down breastworks.

At Ponteau de Mer his comrade, Bernard d'Anglades, persuaded him to quit the royal courtage. Together, declared Bernard, he and Alain could make a fat living cheating with loaded dice, which they called "gourds." They deserted their command forthwith, not even pausing to discard their uniforms, and set up their game on the head of a stolen drum behind a cemetery wall. After watching them a while, a rascally sergeant of the guard named Pierre Empongart told them



they were sure to be caught and caught soon unless they became priests in order to escape the king's men and claim the protection of the Church. They must clip their pates, he explained, and throw away their slashed doublets and colored sleeves if cornered. After shearing themselves then and there, he made them repeat a *Dominus pars*. They strutted away, one on each side of the road, Bernard with Bietrix la Claviere and Alain with Lorenette la Chandeliere.

Lorenette wanted a green cloth jacket, so Alain went back to the White Horse tavern at Lisieux where they had recently bought a jug of wine. That night he crept into the garden, made a hole in the wall with his pike, and so gained the hall of the inn where he found seven brass ecus, a red hat and a gold ring. Jaquet le Grand, pawnbroker of Lisieux, changed this assortment for a jacket such as Lorenette desired.

When they reached Bayeaux Lorenette went to live in a small painted house of none

too scrupulous reputation. Alain the Gentle wanted her back again, but when he went for her the mistress of the house showed him the door, candle in one hand, a dangerous-looking rock in the other, asking him if he would like to have his muscles rubbed to drive away the boils. Alain ran away, but he knocked the candle out of the woman's hand as he went, grabbing what he thought was a precious ring from her finger. It turned out to be only a big pink pebble in a brass setting.

Alain left Lisieux to wander aimlessly along the roads. In the Hotel de Papegaut at Maubusson he found one of his old comrades in arms, Karandas, eating tripe with another fellow by the name of Jehan Petit. Karandas was still carrying his halberd while Jehan Petit wore a purse in his belt with pretty silver trinkets dangling from it. His belt buckle was solid silver too. After some drinking all three decided to walk through the woods to Senlis. It was late

when they took the road, and when they were deep in the darkness of the wood Alain the Gentle prepared himself. Jehan Petit walked just ahead of him; there in the dark Alain let him have the pike straight between the shoulders while Karandas brought his halberd down across his head. Jehan fell flat on his face, then Alain was over him at a stride, cutting his throat from ear to ear. Afterwards Alain stuffed the hole in his neck with dry leaves to avoid leaving a marsh of blood on the path. The moon rose clear above the trees. Alain cut the silver buckle from the dead man's belt and clipped the pretty silver trinkets dangling on his purse. There were sixteen Lyons, gold, in the purse, with thirty-six patars. Alain kept the Lyons, tossing the purse and the trinkets to Karandas for his pains, but holding his pike well poised as he did so. There in the bright moonlight they parted, each his own way, Karandas swearing by the blood of God.

Since Alain the Gentle dared not go on now to Senlis he returned to the city of Rouen. He spent the night under a blossoming hedge and woke surrounded by mounted men who bound his hands and led him off to prison. As they neared the gates he contrived to slip behind one of the horses, making a dash for the church of Saint-Patrice, where he managed to gain the sanctuary of the High Altar. His captors of a moment before were not permitted to pass the door of the sacred building. Safe while he remained there, Alain walked freely up and down the nave and the choir, admiring the fine chalices of rich plate and the other vessels, thinking how nice they would be melted down. The following night he had two companions, Denisot and Marignon, thieves like himself. One of Marignon's ears had been cropped off. Soon they thought of nothing but food, envying the little prowling mice that nested between the flagstones and fattened on crumbs of holy

bread. When the third night came hunger drove them out, all three, and the waiting guardsmen seized them. Alain cried "clerk"—but forgot to take off his green sleeves.

Gaining a moment's retirement for an urgent purpose, he tried to disguise those telltale sleeves by plunging his arms up to the elbows in manure. The sergeant of the guards caught him at it, however, and told the magistrate. A barber shaved Alain's head clean, effacing his priestly tonsure. The judges laughed at the grotesque Latin of his psalms, though he had the audacity to swear a bishop had ordained him with a box on the ear when he was ten years old. He could not begin to say his pater-nosters. They put him to the question like a layman, first on the greater question, then on the lesser. Down by the fires in the kitchen prison he declared all his crimes, his limbs swollen by shackles and his throat racked. A lieutenant pronounced his sentence through the town. Tied to the tail of a

cart, he was dragged all the way to the gallows and hanged. His body grew sunburned after a time, for the hangman took his jacket, his green sleeves and the fine cloth cape trimmed with fur which he had stolen out of a tavern.

GABRIEL SPENCER

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*Actor*





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## *GABRIEL SPENCER*

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HIS mother was a woman named Flum who had a little basement in Piked-Hatch at the end of Rotton-Row. After supper a captain with brass rings on his fingers used to come to see her, along with two gallants in loosened doublets. Flum lodged three girls named Poll, Doll and Moll, and none of them could stand the smell of tobacco. Frequently when they retired to the rooms above, the polite gentlemen would accompany them after first taking a glass of Spanish wine to wash away the taste of their pipes. Little Gabriel used to sit on the hearth watching them roast apples to put in their ale-pots. Actors of all sorts came there too—actors who dared not show themselves in the big taverns where the famous entertainers went. Some of them boasted in the grand manner, others stuttered

like idiots. They often played with Gabriel, teaching him tragic verse and rustic jokes, and once they gave him a scrap of gilt-fringed crimson drapery with a velvet mask and an old wooden dagger. Then he paraded up and down all alone in front of the fireplace until his mother's triple chins shook in a quiver of admiration for her precocious child.

Later on the actors took him to the Green Curtain in Shoreditch, where he trembled to see the excessive rage of a little comedian hurling his way through the rôle of Jeronimo. They showed him old King Lear with his wild white beard, kneeling for pardon before his daughter Cordelia. A clown imitated the follies of Tarlton, while another, wrapped in a bed-quilt, terrified Prince Hamlet. Sir John Oldcastle made everybody laugh with his fat belly, most of all when he snatched his hostess around the waist while she permitted him to rumple her bonnet and slide his fat fingers into the

buckram sack hanging from her belt. The fool sang songs the idiot never could understand. A clown in a cotton hat kept sticking his head out from behind the wings to make faces. They had a juggler, too, with monkeys, and a man dressed up like a woman, whom Gabriel thought looked like his mother, and whom the beadies with their tall maces came stalking to at the end of the piece, dressing him in a rich blue robe, declaring they would carry him off to Bridewell.

When Gabriel was fifteen the Green Curtain players noticed that he was pretty and slim enough to play the parts of women or young girls. He had very white skin and large eyes under fine arched brows. Comb-ing down his unruly black hair, Flum pierced his ears to hold a pair of imitation double pearls. He joined the Duke of Nottingham's troupe where he was given dresses of taffeta and damask with spangles of gold and silver foil, laced corsets, and hempen

wigs with long curls. During rehearsals they taught him to act. He blushed at first when he found himself on the stage, but he was soon responding mincingly to gallantries. Bustling with excitement, Flum brought Poll, Doll and Moll to see him. He must really be a girl, they declared, laughing, and they said they certainly meant to unlace him after the play. They took him back to Piked-Hatch, where his mother made him put on one of his dresses to show the captain, who begged him a thousand mock pardons as he placed a cheap gold-plated ring set with a glass carbuncle on his finger.

Gabriel Spencer's best friends were William Bird, Edward Juby and the two Jeffs. One summer they toured the countryside with a company of vagabond actors, traveling in a tilt-covered wagon that served them also as a shelter when they halted for the night. On the way to Hammersmith one evening, a man stepped out of the road-

side ditch and showed them the muzzle of a pistol.

"Your money!" he demanded. "I am Gamaliel Ratsey, highwayman, by the grace of God . . . and I don't like to wait."

The two Jeffs responded with a wail:

"Money we have not, your grace . . . only a few brass spangles and tinted rags. We are poor wayside actors, like your patron lady herself."

"Actors!" said Gamaliel. "Now this is well met. No rogue nor gamester I, but a good friend of these spectacles. Had I not a certain respect for Old Derrick, waiting to drag me up the ladder and stretch my neck for me, I'd never quit the river banks and happy taverns where you, my sirs, are customed to display such spirit. Welcome ye are this fine night, so up with your stage and give me your best. . . . Gamaliel Ratsey listens. That's not a common thing and you can tell it in the towns."

"But it will cost us money," ventured the two Jeffs timidly.

"Money!" exclaimed Gamaliel. "Who speaks to me of money? I am king here as Elizabeth is queen in the city, and I'll pay you royally. Forty shillings for you."

Trembling, the actors came down from their wagon.

"Please your majesty," asked Bird, "what would you have us play?"

With his eyes on Gabriel Spencer, Gamaliel Ratsey reflected.

"Faith," he said at last, "a pretty piece for this missy, and damn well melancholy. She'll make me an Ophelia with those flower fingers . . . true fingers of death, she has. 'Hamlet,' that's what ye'll do, for well I like the humors of that composition. Were I not Gamaliel I might be Hamlet himself."

They lighted the lanterns. Gamaliel watched the performance attentively. When it was over he said to Gabriel Spencer:

"Sweet Ophelia, I will excuse you from



further compliment. You are free, actors of King Gamaliel. His majesty is satisfied."

Whereupon he disappeared into the darkness.

As the wagon started off at dawn they found him again barring the way, pistol in hand.

"Gamaliel Ratsey, highwayman," he said, "has come for King Gamaliel's forty shillings."

The two Jeffs promptly gave it over.

"Now get on with you!" ordered Gamaliel. "My thanks for the play; decidedly the humors of Hamlet please me infinitely. All courtesies to Ophelia." And with that he galloped away.

Following this adventure the troupe returned to London, where they told a great tale of a mistaken robber stealing their Ophelia, skirts, wig and all. A girl named Pat King, who often came to the Green Curtain, declared she was not a bit surprised. She had a plump face and a round body.

When Flum invited her home to meet Gabriel she found him pretty and kissed him sweetly. After that she came back frequently. Pat was the mistress of a brick-maker who disliked his trade, having an ambition to become an actor at the Green Curtain. His name was Ben Jonson and he was very proud of his education, being a clerk with some knowledge of Latin. He was a big square man, scarred by scrofula; his right eye was higher than his left and he had a loud harsh voice. This colossus had seen service as a soldier in the Low Countries. One day he followed Pat King, seized Gabriel by the scruff of the neck and dragged him out to Hoxton field, where he made him stand up and face him, sword in hand. Flum managed to slip Gabriel a blade ten inches the longer, and this passed through Ben Jonson's arm. Stabbed through the lung, Gabriel died there on the grass. Flum ran for the constables, who carried

Ben Jonson off swearing to Newgate. Flum hoped they would hang him but he recited his Latin poems to show he was a clerk, so they only branded him on the hand with a red-hot iron.



POCAHONTAS

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*Princess*



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## *POCAHONTAS*

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POCAHONTAS was the daughter of King Powhatan who ruled from a couch-like throne draped in coon-skin robes with all the tails hanging down. She was raised in a house made of plaited reeds, among priests and women whose faces and shoulders were painted vivid red, and who amused her with leather toys and snake rattles. Namontak, a faithful old servant, watched over the princess while she played; sometimes they took her into the woods beside the wide Rappahannock River where thirty young girls would dance for her. They would be tinted bright colors and girdled with green leaves, having goats' horns on their heads and otter skins in their belts as they shook their clubs, leaping around a crackling fire. The dance over, they would stamp out the fire and



return with the princess in the glowing light of smoldering embers.

During the year 1607 the land of Pocahontas was troubled by Europeans. Ruined gentlemen, criminals and gold seekers came down the Potomac and built log cabins. To this scattered group of huts they gave the name Jamestown and they called their colony Virginia. In those first years Virginia was no more than a small impoverished fort on Chesapeake Bay, surrounded by the domains of the great King Powhatan. For their leader the colonists chose Captain John Smith, who earlier had sought adventure in the East among the Turks. Under his command they wandered along the rocks, living on shellfish together with what little grain they were able to secure through traffic with the Indians.

At first they were received with great ceremony. A native priest came to them playing a reed flute, his braided locks crowned by a diadem of elk hair tinted red

and arranged in rosettes. His body was painted crimson, his face blue, and he glittered from head to foot with ornaments of native silver. Straight and grim, he squatted on a carpet of mats, smoking a pipe filled with tobacco.

Then others came, forming a solid square around the white men. Some were painted black, others red or white or in variegated colors. They sang and danced before their idol, which they called Oki—an image made of snake skins stuffed with mosses and hung with copper chains.

In spite of this show of friendliness, Captain Smith was assailed a few days later while exploring the river, and was taken and bound. Amid wild war-cries he was carried away to a long-hut to be left there under a guard of forty savages. Priests with eyes made red and black faces crossed by broad white bands circled around the fire sprinkling grains of wheat on the ground. Then John Smith was conducted to the house of

the King. Powhatan sat cloaked in his fur robes; near him were other chieftains, their locks filled with feathers. A woman brought water for John Smith to bathe his hands, and another dried them on a tuft of down. Meanwhile two red giants placed flat stones at Powhatan's feet, and the King raised his hand in a sign for John Smith to kneel there and be beheaded.

Advancing timidly through the circle of painted chiefs, Pocahontas threw herself before the Captain, her head against his cheek. She was only twelve years old. John Smith was twenty-nine. On his aquiline face he wore big straight mustaches and a fan-shaped beard. Pocahontas, they told him, was the name of the princess who had saved his life. But that was not her real name. Powhatan made peace with John Smith and set him free.

A year later Captain Smith camped with his men in a dense woodland one night when a penetrating rain deadened all sound.

Suddenly Pocahontas touched his shoulder. Alone she had come through the dark to warn him how her father planned an attack, intending to kill the English while they sat at supper. She begged him to go at once if he wished to live. Captain Smith offered her beads and ribbons but she only cried, telling him she did not want them. Then she went away alone into the forest.

The following year found Smith in disgrace among the colonists and in 1609 he embarked for England. There he wrote books about Virginia, explained the colonial situation, recounted his adventures. About 1612 a certain Captain Argall, having gone to trade among the Potomacs (Powhatan's tribe), took Pocahontas away as hostage. Her father was furious but she was not given back. She remained a prisoner until a gentleman of the court, one John Rolfe, became fascinated with her and married her. They say Pocahontas confessed her love for John Smith to a priest who visited her in

her prison. In June, 1616, she reached London where her advent aroused much curiosity at court. Good Queen Anne received her kindly, ordering her portrait engraved by a great artist.

About to return to Virginia, Captain John Smith called to pay his respects before embarking. He had not seen Pocahontas since 1608; she was now twenty two. When he entered she turned her face away, replying neither to the words of her husband nor her friends, remaining alone and silent for several hours. Then she called for Smith, and raising her eyes she said to him:

“You promised Powhatan whatever belonged to you was his and he promised you the same. A stranger in his country, you called him father—I am a stranger in your country and I shall call you that.”

Captain Smith excused himself from the familiarity, for, he explained, she was the daughter of a king.

She replied:

“You were not afraid to come to my

father's country, and he dreaded you, he and all his people . . . excepting me. Here, do you think I shall not call you my father? I will say 'my father' and you shall say 'my child' and I will belong to your people always. . . . They told me over there that you were dead."

Her name, she confided secretly to John Smith, was Matoaka. Fearing witchcraft, the Indians had falsely reported it to be Pocahontas.

John Smith sailed for Virginia. He never saw Matoaka again. When she sickened at Gravesend shortly after the beginning of the following year, she soon grew pale and died. She was not quite twenty-three.

Her portrait carries this inscription: "*Matoaka alias Rebecca filia potentissimi principis Powhatani imperatoris Virginæ.*" It shows poor Matoaka in a high felt hat with two garlands of pearls, a ruffed collette of lace and a plumed fan. Her face appears wan, her cheekbones are high and her large eyes are soft.





CYRIL TOURNEUR

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*Tragic Poet*



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## *CYRIL TOURNEUR*

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CYRIL TOURNEUR was born out of the union of an unknown god with a prostitute. Proof enough of his divine origin has been found in the herioc atheism to which he succumbed. From his mother he inherited the instinct for revolt and luxury, the fear of death, the thrill of passion and the hate of kings. His father bequeathed him his desire for a crown, his pride of power and his joy of creating. To him both parents handed down their taste for nocturnal things, for a red glare in the night, and for blood.

The exact date of his birth is not known, though we are told that he appeared one dark day during a pestilential year.

No celestial protector watched over the woman whose body was swollen with this

infant god, for the plague touched her several days before her confinement, and the door of her little house was marked with a red cross. At the moment when Cyril Tourneur was coming into the world the sexton at the cemetery began to toll the bell for the burial of the dead. Then, quite as his father had disappeared into that heaven common to all gods, so a green cart dragged his mother away to the common grave of men.

That night is said to have been so dark that the sexton had to hold a torch by the pesthouse door while the grim carter gathered his load. Another historian tells us how the mists upon the river Thames (by Cyril Tourneur's birthplace) were shot with scarlet rays while the sound of the bells was like the barking of cynocephales. There is little doubt but that a real star rose flaming over the house-tops. The new-born child shook his feeble fists as its fiery, malevolent gleams mottled his upturned face.

So came Cyril Tourneur into the empty vastness of the Cimmerian night.

It is impossible to discover what were his thoughts or habits before he reached the age of thirty. The signs of his latent divinity had no record, nor do we know how he first recognized his hidden sovereignty. An obscure list of his blasphemies has come to light. From this document we know that he declared Moses nothing more than a juggler, while one named Heriot, he said, was an infinitely cleverer juggler than Moses. The beginning of religion, according to Cyril, consisted in terrorizing man. Christ, he held, merited death more than Barabbas, though Barabbas were thief and murderer. Should he, Cyril Tourneur, write a new religion, he said, he could vow to establish it upon a finer, more admirable basis. He thought the style of the New Testament wholly repugnant. He declared that his right to coin money was as good as the queen of England's, and furthermore, that

he knew a man named Poole, a prisoner at Newgate, with whose aid he meant some day to strike gold pieces in his own image. A pious soul has erased the more terrible affirmations from this document.

Cyril Tourneur's words have been overheard and his gestures thought to indicate an atheism even more vindictive. He has been represented to us cloaked in a long black robe, a glorious twelve-starred crown on his head, his feet resting on the celestial sphere while he holds the terrestrial globe in his right hand. Pale as a wax taper on an altar, with eyes deeply aglow like burning incense, he walked the streets on stormy nights when the pest was over the city. Some have said he had a strange mark like a seal on his right thigh, but the point will never be verified since no one saw his body naked after death.

For mistress he took a prostitute from Bankside, a girl who had haunted the waterfront streets. He called her Rosamonde.

His love for her was unique. On her blonde, innocent face the rouge spots burned like flickering flames, and she was very young. Rosamonde bore Cyril Tourneur a daughter whom he loved. Having been looked at by a prince Rosamonde died tragically, drinking emerald-colored poison from a transparent cup.

Vengeance merged with pride in Cyril's soul. Night came . . . he walked the Mall, down the full length of that royal promenade, flourishing a torch of burning horse-hair to illuminate his face, this poisoner prince. Hatred of all who reign was in his mouth and on his hands. So he became a highwayman, not to steal but to assassinate kings. Various princes who disappeared in those days were lighted to their death by Cyril Tourneur's torch before he killed them.

He would lie in wait along the queen's highway, hiding near some gravel pit or lime kiln. Selecting his victim from a group of



travelers he would offer to guide the gentleman through the quagmires. At the mouth of the pit he would extinguish his torch and hurl the unsuspecting man into the black hole. The gravel always gave way under their feet and Cyril would roll two enormous stones down to stifle the cries. In the dull glow of the kiln, he would sit through the night watching the cadaver as the lime consumed it.

When Cyril Tourneur had thus satisfied his hatred for kings he was assailed by his hatred of the gods. The divine spark within him urged him on to original creation. He dreamed of founding an entire generation out of his own blood—a race of gods on earth. He looked at his daughter. She was pure and desirable. To carry out his plan under the eyes of heaven he chose a cemetery as the most appropriate scene. Vowing to brave death and create a new humanity in the heart of that destruction decreed by the

gods, Cyril Tourneur sought among old, dead bones to engender new ones. He carried out this project on the roof of a charnel-house.

The end of his life is lost in a haze of obscurity. We may not be sure what pen has given us the *The Atheist's Tragedy* and the *The Revenger's Tragedy*. One legend pretends that the pride of Cyril Tourneur went still farther. He is said to have raised a black throne in his garden. Several persons have seen him sitting there with his gold crown on his head, though they all ran away, frightened by the long blue aigrettes waving to and fro above him. He read the poems of Empedocles in the manuscript. He often expressed his admiration for the manner in which the ancient poet died. No one saw the manuscript of Empedocles after Cyril Tourneur disappeared. That year the plague was come again, and the people of London took refuge on barges floating mid-stream in the Thames. One night a meteor

flashed across the face of the moon. Moving with a sinister roar it whirled like a globe of white fire toward Cyril Tourneur's house. On his black throne, in his black robes and his golden crown, the man waited for the comet. Like a battle on the stage, an ominous blast of trumpets sounded a funereal fanfare across the night. In a shimmering, sanguine blaze, Cyril Tourneur was borne away to some unknown god in the somber, stormy regions of the sky.

WILLIAM PHIPS

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*Treasure Hunter*



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## WILLIAM PHIPS

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WILLIAM PHIPS was born in 1651 near the mouth of the Kennebec River and those forests from which the shipbuilders cut their lumber. In a Maine village, poor and small, he dreamed his dreams of fortune hunting and adventure for the first time. There, in the sight of ships and makers of ships, the shifting, changing light from the New England seas brought to his eyes a gleam of sunken gold—a gleam of silver buried beneath the sands. Wealth was out there under the sea, he believed, and he wanted it. He learned shipbuilding, earned a small stake, journeyed to Boston. Strong in his faith, he repeated this prophecy: “Some day I’ll command a king’s ship and own a fine brick house on Green Street.”

In those days numerous shipwrecked Spanish galleons laden with gold lay rotting

at the bottom of the Atlantic. Rumors of them stirred William Phips to the soul. When he learned of a mighty one, wrecked years ago near Port de la Plata, he sailed for London after scraping together all the money he could command, planning to fit out an expedition. He besieged the admiralty with petitions. They finally gave him *The Rose of Algiers*, carrying eighteen guns, and in 1687 he set sail for the unknown. He was thirty-six years old.

*The Rose of Algiers* was manned by a crew of ninety-five. Adderly, the first mate, came from Providence. When the men first learned that Phips had set his course for the island of Hispaniola they were not overjoyed, for Hispaniola was a pirate stronghold while *The Rose of Algiers* had every appearance of an honest craft.

When they first touched land the sailors called a council between themselves with the intent of becoming gentlemen of fortune. While they were assembled on a little beach,



Phips stood at the prow of *The Rose of Algiers*, scanning the sea. The ship's carpenter chanced to overhear the crew's conspiracy and carried the tale at once to the captain's cabin. Phips ordered one broadside discharged at his mutinous men, then sailed away with several faithful sailors, leaving the rest marooned there, on a barren stretch of the archipelago. Adderly, the mate from Providence, managed to regain the vessel by swimming.

They came to Hispaniola on a calm sea under a burning sun. Phips asked questions about all the vessels that had foundered in these waters during the past half century, in sight of Port de la Plata. An old Spaniard remembered one, showing Phips the very reef. It was a long, round rock with sides sloping away, down to the far depths of the clear, vibrant water. Perched in the rigging, Adderly laughed to see the waves go whirling in little ripples and eddies, as *The Rose of Algiers* made a slow tour of the

reef, while all the men examined the transparent sea in vain. Phips stood on the fo'castle, tapping his foot, pacing up and down between the winches and spars. Once more *The Rose of Algiers* made a turn of the reef, but the ocean floor was all alike, with its wet sand patterned in concentric waves, and its feathery sea-verdure moving gently to the wash of the current. When *The Rose of Algiers* came about for her third tour of the reef the sun went down and the sea grew black.

Then it grew phosphorescent. "There's the treasure," shouted Adderly through the darkness, pointing to the smoky gold streaking the surface of the sea. But the hot dawn of the tropics revealed an ocean clear and tranquil, and *The Rose of Algiers* continued her monotonous course. Eight days she held to it, until the men's eyes burned red from their constant scrutiny of the limpid depths. Phips ran out of provisions. There was nothing to do but de-

part, so he gave the order and *The Rose of Algiers* came about. At that moment Adderly spied an unusual cluster of pure white seaweed growing on a side of the reef. He wanted it, so one of the Indians plunged, plucked the thing and brought it up, hanging straight and heavy from his hand. It was strangely heavy, the twisted roots seeming to entwine themselves around some form not unlike a pebble. Adderly swung the roots down against the deck to rid them of this weight, and a bright object rolled out sparkling in the sunlight. Phips yelled aloud. It was a lump of silver worth three hundred pounds. Adderly waved the white seaweed stupidly while the Indians began to dive. Within a few hours the deck was covered with old sacks as hard as stone, petrified, grown over completely with barnacles and little shells. When they were split open with cold chisels and mallets a stream of gold and silver nuggets and pieces of eight came pouring out of the holes. "God be

praised!" cried Phips, "our fortune is made." In all, the treasure amounted to three hundred thousand pounds sterling. Adderly kept repeating, "and all that came out of the root of a white seaweed!" He died at Bermuda several days later, raving mad.

Phips brought his treasure back. The King of England made him Sir William Phips, naming him High Sheriff of Boston. There he realized his dreams when he built a fine house of red brick on Green Street. He became a man of some importance. It was he who led the campaign against the French possessions, taking Arcadia from de Meneval and de Villebon, whereupon the king made him Governor of Massachusetts and Captain-General of Maine and Newfoundland. His strong-boxes were now heaped with gold. Then he set out to capture Quebec after gathering up all the loose money in Boston to fund his project. The enterprise failed and the colony was ruined. Phips tried issuing paper money, giving out

his own gold in exchange, hoping by that measure to increase the value of the paper. But fortune had turned. The paper could not be upheld and Phips lost everything. Soon he found himself poor, in debt, harassed by his enemies. His prosperity had only lasted eight years. As he was embarking miserably enough, for London, he was arrested in default of twenty thousand pounds at the request of Dudley and Brenton, and was taken to Fleet Prison.

They locked Sir William Phips in a bare cell. The only thing he had saved was the silver nugget that brought him his fortune—the silver nugget from the white seaweed. Fever and despair were on him: death took him by the throat. He struggled, haunted by visions of treasure. The galleon of the Spanish governor Bobadilla had gone down, loaded with gold and silver, in the vicinity of the Bahamas. Gaunt with fever and his last, furious hope, Phips sent for the keeper

of the prison. Holding out his silver nugget in his shriveled hand, he mumbled crazily:

“Let me dive—here, see? Here is one of the nuggets of Bo-ba-dil-la!”

Then he died. The nugget from the white seaweed paid for his coffin.

CAPTAIN KIDD

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*Pirate*





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## CAPTAIN KIDD

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How this pirate came by the name of Kidd is not altogether clear. The act through which William the Third of England granted him his commission of the *Adventure* in 1695 began with these words: "To our faithful and well loved captain, William Kidd, commander . . . greetings." Certainly from that time on it was a name of war. In battle or maneuver some say he always had the elegant habit of wearing delicate kid gloves with revers of Flanders lace. Others declare he would cry out during his worst butcheries: "Me?—why, I'm as meek and mild as a new-born kid!" Still others there are who say he stored his treasure in sacks made from the skins of young goats, the custom dating from the time he pillaged a ship laden with quicksilver, emptying a thousand bags of this metal which

remain buried even now on the slopes of a little hill in the Barbadoes. It is enough to know that his black silk flag was blazoned with a death's head and the head of a goat, and his seal graven with the same emblems. Some who have hunted the numerous treasures Kidd buried in Asia and America have driven a little goat before them, thinking it would bleat if it crossed the Captain's path, but no one has ever found his hidden gold.

Guided by Gabriel Loff, one of Kidd's old sailors, Blackbeard himself searched the dunes where Fort Providence now stands, finding no more than a few traces of quicksilver oozing up through the sand. All this digging has been useless, for Kidd himself told how his secrets would remain eternally undiscovered because of the "man with the bloody bucket." He was haunted by this man all his life, and his treasures have been haunted and defended by him ever since.

Irritated by the enormous amount of piracy in the West Indies, Lord Bellamont,

governor of the Barbadoes, fitted out the galley *Adventure*, obtaining a commander's commission for Captain Kidd. Long envious of the famous pirate, Ireland, Kidd promised Lord Bellamont he would capture Ireland's sloop-o'-war together with the person of its master and all his crew, and bring them back for execution. The *Adventure* carried thirty guns and one hundred and fifty men. Kidd first put in at Madeira to take on wine; he then touched at Buena Vista for a supply of salt, and at last reached Santiago where he provisioned his ship completely. From that point he set sail for the mouth of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and a little island called the Key of Bab.

It was there he raised the skull and cross-bones and reorganized his crew. Assembled on the ship's hatch, he swore them all to absolute obedience of the rules of piracy. Each man had a right to vote and a right to equal shares of fresh provisions and strong liquors. Cards and dice were for-

bidden. All lights out by eight at night; if a man would drink later he must drink on deck under the open sky. The company received neither woman nor boy. Should they be found in disguise death was the penalty. Guns, pistols and cutlasses always to be held in readiness. Quarrels to be settled on land with saber or pistol. Two parts of the spoils were for captain and quartermaster, one and a half parts for mate, bos'un and gunner, one part and a quarter for other officers. Rest for the musicians on the Sabbath Day.

The first ship encountered was Dutch, commanded by Skipper Mitchel. Kidd broke out the French flag and gave chase. The other vessel raised the same colors, at which Kidd hailed her in French, and when the pirate boarded the Dutch ship with his crew, Skipper Mitchel called out a Frenchman from among his own men to act as interpreter. Kidd asked him if he had a passport, and to his affirmative, replied: "Well, by God, if you've got a passport I'll make you

captain of this ship." Then he had him hanged from the yard-arm, afterwards bringing the Dutchmen up one by one, questioning them, pretending not to hear their Flemish names and condemning them with these words: "French? . . . the plank!" A plank was swung over the side. All the Dutchmen walked it naked, stepping into the sea at the point of the bos'un's cutlass.

Moore was Kidd's gunner. Moore was drunk. Raising his voice he asked: "Captain, why are you killing these men?" Kidd picked up a heavy bucket and went for him, and Moore fell with his brains spilling out of a skull split wide. There were matted hairs glued to the bucket in a curd of blood, so Kidd ordered it washed, but none of the crew would ever use it again. They left it hanging in the rigging.

A voice unheard by any save himself cried out behind Kidd's shoulder: "Fill a bucket!" He whirled on it but his cutlass

slashed only empty air, and he wiped a fleck of foam from his lips. Then he hanged some Armenians. When Kidd attacked the *Lark* he slept stretched out on his bunk after the division of the loot. Waking in a heavy sweat he called for water to bathe himself. A sailor brought it in a pewter basin. Starting at that common receptacle Kidd exclaimed: "Is that what you bring a gentleman of fortune . . . a bucket of blood?" The sailor fled; later Kidd drove him from the ship, marooning him on a remote rock with a rifle, a powder-horn and a flask of water. When Captain Kidd buried his famous treasures in so many lonely places he had no other reason but the persuasion that his murdered gunner came every night with his bloody bucket to dig up the gold and hurl it into the sea.

Captured at last in New York, Kidd was sent by Lord Bellamont to London where he was tried and hanged on Execution Dock in his red cloak and his gloves. When the

hangman placed the black Milan cap over his eyes, Kidd cried out: "Great God! he's putting his bucket over my head!" The blackened corpse hung in chains for more than twenty years.





WALTER KENNEDY

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*Unlettered Pirate*



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## WALTER KENNEDY

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CAPTAIN KENNEDY was an Irishman. He could neither read nor write. Under the great Roberts he rose to the lieutenant grade by merit of his talent for torture. He was perfection itself at the art of tightening a cord around a prisoner's brow until his eyes popped out, or of tickling his face with a flaming palm leaf. When Darby Mullin was tried for treason aboard the *Corsaire* Captain Kennedy's reputation became assured. Seated in a semicircle behind the wheel house, the judges assembled with their long tobacco pipes around a bowl of punch. Then the process began. They were about to vote the verdict when someone suggested another pipe before concluding the business. Kennedy rose, drew his clay from his pocket, spat and delivered himself of the following sentiments:

“Great God, sirs, devil take me if we don’t hang me old comrade Darby Mullin. Darby’s a good lad and —— the man who says he ain’t. And we’re gentlemen o’ fortune. Hell, Darby and me has bunked together: I love him with all me heart, I do. But Great God, sirs, I know him, the —— He’ll never repent, devil take me if he will, eh, ain’t that so, Darby me lad? Good God, go ahead and hang him! Hang him by all means. And now, sirs, with the leave o’ the honorable company I’ll just step up and take a good swig to his health.”

This discourse was considered admirable—as great as any of those noble military orations reported by the ancients. Roberts was enchanted, and from that day Kennedy became ambitious. Near the Barbadoes Roberts embarked in a sloop to pursue a Portuguese vessel. During his absence Kennedy forced his shipmates to elect him captain of the *Corsaire*, then sailed away on an enterprise of his own making. He looted

and scuttled numerous brigantines and galleys carrying cargoes of sugar or tobacco from Brazil, not to speak of the gold dust and sacks of doubloons and pieces of eight. His black silk flag displayed a death's head, two cross-bones, an hour-glass and a heart pierced by an arrow from which fell three drops of blood. With that insignia flying, he one day encountered a peaceable ship from Virginia, under the command of a Quaker named Knot. The pious man had neither rum, pistol, cutlass nor saber aboard. He was dressed in a long black coat topped by a broad-brimmed hat of the same color.

"Great God!" exclaimed Kennedy. "Here's a gay fellow! Now that's what I like to see. No harm to my friend Captain Knot who wears such a joyful uniform."

"Amen," responded Knot, "so be it."

Then the pirates threw gifts to the Quaker: thirty moidors, ten rolls of Brazilian tobacco and several packets of

emeralds. Brother Knot picked up the moidors, the gems and the tobacco.

"These be welcome gifts," he said, "for they may be put to pious use. Ah, would to heaven all our friends who scour the seas were moved by such sentiments! The Lord accepts all restitutions. These are the flesh of the calf and the limbs of the idol Dagon that you offer, my friends, as sacrifice. Dagon still rules in these wicked lands and his gold brings evil temptations."

"Dagon be damned," roared Kennedy. "Great God, shut that snout of yours and have a drink."

Brother Knot bowed peacefully, though he refused the rum offered him.

"My friends . . ." he began.

"Great God," interrupted Kennedy, "call us gentlemen of fortune!"

"Friends and gentlemen," Knot began for a second time, "strong liquors be goads of temptation our feeble flesh cannot endure. As for you, my friends . . ."

"Gentlemen of fortune, Great God!" corrected Kennedy.

"As for you, friends and fortunate gentlemen," continued Brother Knot, "you who be hardened by long years of strife against the Tempter, it is possible, nay, even probable I shall say, that you no longer feel his sting. But we, your friends, should be troubled, gravely troubled . . ."

"To the devil with your troubles," said Kennedy. "This man can talk, but I can drink better. He'll fetch us to Carolina to see his fine friends who probably own some more limbs of the calf," the pirate went on. "Eh, Captain Dagon?"

"So be it," agreed the Quaker. "But my name is Knot."

And he bowed again, the broad brim of his hat shaking in the wind.

The *Corsaire* dropped anchor in a creek well known to the Quaker man, who promised to return and bring his friends. He did return, that same night, leading a company

of military sent by Governor Spotswood of Carolina. The man of God swore to his friends, those fortunate gentlemen, that his only motive was to prevent the introduction of tempting liquors into this profane land. When the pirates were arrested he said:

“Ah, my friends, how mortified I am that this must be!”

“Great God!” said Kennedy. “Mortified is the word.”

He was put in irons and taken to London for trial. Old Bailey got him. He made his mark on all the questionnaires and on the receipt for his capture. His last discourse was delivered on Execution Dock, where the wind from the sea swayed all the corpses of former gentlemen of fortune, still hanging in their chains.

“Great God! what an honor,” said Kennedy, staring at the dangling cadavers. “They’re going to stick me up beside Captain Kidd. He ain’t got any eyes left, but



it's him all right—who else would be wearing such a grand crimson coat? He was elegant, Kidd was. And he could write. He knew his letters, he did; —— me, what a fine hand! Pardon, Captain (he saluted the shriveled corpse in crimson). They, too, were gentlemen of fortune.”



MAJOR STEDE-BONNET

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*Pirate by Fancy*



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## *MAJOR STEDE-BONNET*

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MAJOR STEDE-BONNET was a gentleman and a retired soldier living on his plantation in the Barbadoes in the year 1715. His fields of sugar-cane and coffee brought him a good income, and he had the pleasure of smoking tobacco he himself had cultivated. He had been unhappily married, for his wife, it was said, had driven him slightly mad, though his aberrations were only mild ones until after the quarantine. At first, his servants and neighbors humored them as mere childish fancies.

Major Stede-Bonnet's peculiarity was the following: on every possible occasion he made a scathing denouncement of all who lived and fought on land, then launched forth a flood of praise for seafaring men. The only names sweet in his mouth were those of Avery, Charles Vane, Benjamin

Hornigold or Edward Teach, good hardy navigators, in his opinion, true men of enterprise. They were all infesting the seas in the vicinity of the Antilles at that time, but if anyone called them pirates in his hearing the Major would exclaim:

“Thank God, then, for these pirates, as you say, who give us an example of such free lives as our forefathers led. They had no rich men in their days, no women coddlers, no slaves to fetch them sugar and cotton and indigo, but one generous God distributing all things and to each man his just part. That’s why I like these fine free fellows who live as companions in fortune, dividing the prizes between them.”

Tramping over his plantation, the Major often stopped to thump some laborer on the shoulder, saying:

“Wouldn’t you be better off now, you fool, if you was stowing those bales away in the hold of a tidy brigantine instead of spilling your sweat in this dust?”

Nearly every evening he called his servants together under a grain shed to read them stories of the great exploits achieved by the pirates of Hispaniola or Turtle Island, for all the gazettes and journals of the day were telling how these men ravaged villages and farms along the coast. The Major read by candlelight, while big blue flies droned around his head.

“Excellent Vane,” he would cry. “Brave Hornigold, a real horn of plenty full of gold! Sublime Avery, loaded with the jewels of the Great Mogul and the kings of Madagascar! Admirable Teach—you who ruled fourteen wives, one after the other, then got rid of them all—you, Teach, who handed over your last one (she was only sixteen) to your friends every night (out of pure generosity, grandeur of the soul and sheer love of science), at Okerecok, that fine island of yours! How happy are they who follow your wake, who drink their rum with

you, Blackbeard, master of the *Queen Anne's Revenge!*"

The Major's servants listened to these discourses in silent surprise. His only interruptions were soft little noises when small lizards fell down from the roof, the suction grip of their tiny cupped feet loosened by fright. Shielding the candle with his hand, the Major reviewed famous naval maneuvers with the point of his cane, tracing plans and positions among the tobacco leaves on the floor. He threatened the cradle (that was what the pirates called forty strokes of the lash) to any listener who failed to understand and grasp the finesse of those filibustering tactics.

At last Major Stede-Bonnet could resist no longer. He bought an old sloop with ten guns mounted on her, and took on all the essential paraphernalia of piracy, including cutlasses, cross-bows, ladders, planks, grappling hooks, hatches, Bibles (to take oath by), kegs of rum, lanterns, soot for black-



ening faces, pitch, wicks to burn under the fingernails of rich merchants, a mighty supply of black flags with skulls and cross-bones on them, and the name of the vessel—*The Revenge*. After driving seventy of his domestic servants aboard to be his pirate crew, he set sail in the night, heading due west with the intention of skirting Saint Vincent, tacking back by way of Yucatan and pillaging all the coast as far as Savannah—where he never arrived.

Major Stede-Bonnet knew nothing of the sea or its language. Between the compass and the astrolabe he began to lose his reason completely; he confused mizzen with bos'un, the jib with the brig, the foresail with the fo'castle; he called the wheel the keel, said starboard when he meant larboard and aft when he meant abaft. All those strange words and the disquieting motion of the sea combined to upset him until he wished himself safe ashore on his plantation in the Barbadoes, and would probably have re-

turned without further adventure were it not for his glorious desire to raise the skull and cross-bones at sight of the first vessel encountered. He had neglected to put aboard any provisions, counting as he did on ample loot, but since not a single sail was spied the first night, Major Stede-Bonnet decided to attack a village.

Hailing all his men to the bridge-head he handed out the brand-new cutlasses, urging the crew to their utmost ferocity. From a bucket of soot he proceeded to black his own face, commanding the others to follow suit, which they did with some gayety.

Recalling his pirate lore, he judged it best to stimulate his men with a few drinks of some reliable pirate beverage, so he doled out to each one a pint of rum and gunpowder mixed (wine, he knew, was the proper ingredient, but he had none). The servant sailors drank their rations down, though contrary to rule, their faces were not instantly suffused with fury. There was,

in fact, a concerted movement both to port and to starboard as they hastened their sooty faces over the rail, offering the mixture to the depths of that villainous sea. By this time *The Revenge* was all but stranded on the beach of Saint Vincent, so the pirates went staggering ashore.

It was morning. The astonished faces of the villagers somehow failed to excite a great deal of piratical frenzy; even Major Stede-Bonnet was not overmuch disposed to do violence. He showed his ferocity, however, by purchasing rice, vegetables and salt pork which he paid for (in a noble buccaneer manner, it seemed to him) with two kegs of rum and some old rope. When his crew had humbly pushed *The Revenge* afloat the Major again set out to sea, proud of his first conquest.

He sailed all that day and all that night without the faintest notion what wind propelled him. Towards the dawn of the second day, while he slept propped up against

the wheel-house, much discomforted by his cutlass and blunderbuss, Major Stede-Bonnet was aroused by a shout.

“Sloop ahoy!”

Rising, he saw another ship standing off at about one cable length. In her prow was a man with a big full beard. A small black flag floated from her pinnacle.

“Hoist our death flag! hoist our death flag!” commanded the Major hurriedly. As he thought it over, his proper title was the title of a landlubber soldier, so he decided to take a new name immediately, following the illustrious example set by famous leaders of his new profession. He answered without further delay:

“Sloop *The Revenge*, commanded by me, Captain Thomas, with my companions in fortune.”

The man with the beard burst out laughing.

“Well met,” he roared. “Comrade, we can both drift awhile. Come, have a go of

rum with me aboard *The Queen Anne's Revenge.*"

And Major Stede-Bonnet realized he was about to meet Captain Teach, alias Blackbeard, most famous of all the pirates he had so admired. But the Major's joy was not now as acute as he thought it would be, for he had a notion that he might presently be losing his splendid piratical liberty. He went rather grimly over to Teach who received him with much ceremony, glass in hand.

"Comrade," Blackbeard began, "you please me infinitely, but your navigating shows no prudence. So if you trust me, Captain Thomas, you will stay here while I send a brave able fellow by the name of Richards to sail your sloop for you. On Blackbeard's ship you will find all the freedom due a gentleman of fortune."

Major Stede-Bonnet dared not refuse. They took away his cutlass and his blunderbuss. He was sworn in on a hatch (Black-

beard could not suffer the sight of a Bible), given his ration of biscuits and rum, promised his share in future prizes. The Major had never dreamed a pirate's life could be so orderly. When he sailed away from the Barbadoes he had been a gentleman fancying himself a pirate. Now that he was to become a real pirate aboard *The Queen Anne's Revenge* he no longer fancied the life so ardently.

Submitting to Blackbeard's rages and the ocean's terrors he led that existence for three months, assisting his master in thirteen captures; finally returning to his own sloop, *The Revenge* under Richard's command. It was a fortunate and prudent change, for the following night Blackbeard was attacked at the entrance of Okerecok Island by Lieutenant Maynard of Bathtown. Blackbeard was killed in the resulting combat and the Lieutenant sailed away with the pirate's head swinging from his bowsprit.



For several weeks poor Captain Thomas fled in the direction of South Carolina. Advised of his coming, the governor of Charlestown sent a Colonel Rhet with orders to effect his arrest at the Sullivan Islands. Captain Thomas allowed himself to be taken. Under the name of Major Stede-Bonnet (which he speedily resumed), he was led back to Charlestown in some pomp. Held in jail until November the tenth, 1718, he appeared at that date before a court of the admiralty. Chief Justice Nicholas Trot condemned him to death with the delightful address that follows:

“Major Stede-Bonnet, you have been convicted on two charges of piracy. In as much as you have pillaged something like thirteen ships you could easily be convicted on eleven additional charges. Two, however, have been found sufficient (said Nicholas Trot) for those two are contrary to our divine law, *‘Thou shalt not steal’* (Ex. 20, 15) and the apostle Saint Paul expressly

declared: *'Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God'* (I Cor. 6, 10). You are further guilty of homicide (said Nicholas Trot), and assassins *'Shall dwell forever in a burning lake of fire and sulphur'* (Apoc. 21, 8) (said Nicholas Trot), *'shall dwell with the devouring fire'* (Is. 33, 14.) Ah, Major Stede-Bonnet, I have reason to fear the religious principles im-  
bued in your youth (said Nicholas Trot), have been sadly corrupted by your wicked life and your too nice application to the literature, and the vain philosophy of our time, for had your delight been in *'The law of the Lord'* (said Nicholas Trot), had you *'Meditated upon it night and day'* (Ps. 1, 2), you would have found by now that *'His word is a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path'* (Ps. 119, 105.) But since you have not minded this you must fly to the *'Lamb of God'* (said Nicholas Trot), *'which taketh away the sin of the world'* on the



promise that '*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*' (Jno. 6, 37). If you return to him now (said Nicholas Trot), like the vineyard laborers in the parable of the eleventh hour (Mat. 20, 6, 9), he can yet receive you. But for the present (said Nicholas Trot), the court pronounces that you shall be hanged by the neck until you are dead."

Major Stede-Bonnet, having listened with all compunction to this discourse by the chief justice, was hanged that same day at Charlestown as a thief and a pirate.



BURKE AND HARE

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*Assassins*



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## *BURKE AND HARE*

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MR. WILLIAM BURKE rose from the meanest obscurity to eternal renown. Born in Ireland, he started life as a shoemaker, later practicing his trade for several years in Edinburgh where he made the acquaintance of Mr. Hare, on whom he had the greatest influence. In the collaboration of Messrs. Burke and Hare the inventive and analytic powers belonged, no doubt, to Mr. Burke, but their two names remain inseparable in art, as inseparable as the names of Beaumont and Fletcher. Together they lived, together they worked and they were finally taken together. Mr. Hare never protested against the popular favor particularly attached to the person of Mr. Burke. Disinterestedness so complete seldom has its recompense. It was Mr. Burke who bequeathed his name to the special process that

brought the two collaborators into fame. The monosyllable "Burke" will live long on the lips of men, while even now Hare's personality seems to have disappeared into that oblivion which spreads unjustly over obscure labors.

Into his work Mr. Burke brought the fairie fancy of the green island where he was born. His soul was evidently steeped in old tales and folklore, and there was something like a far-away, musty odor of the *Arabian Nights* in all he did. Like a caliph pacing a nocturnal garden in Bagdad, he desired mysterious adventures, curious for the glamour of strange people and unknown things. Like a huge black slave armed with a heavy scimitar, he found for his voluptuousness no more fitting conclusion than the death of others, but his Anglo-Saxon originality led him to succeed in drawing the most practical ends from his fanciful Celtic prowlings. When his artistic joy is sated what does the black slave do with his headless carcasses?

With barbarity entirely Arab, he slices them into quarters and salts them down in the cellar. What good does he get from that? Nothing. Mr. Burke was infinitely superior.

Somehow Mr. Hare served him as a sort of Dinarzade. It seemed as if the inventive powers of Mr. Burke were especially excited by the presence of his friend. The broad illusion of their dream permitted them to lodge their most pompous visions in a garret. Mr. Hare had a small chamber on the sixth floor of a tall house filled very full of Edinburghers. A sofa, a large desk and several toilet utensils were undoubtedly all the furnishings, including a bottle of whisky with three glasses on a little table. It was Mr. Burke's rule to invite some passerby at nightfall, but he never received more than one at a time and never twice the same. He would walk through the streets examining all faces that piqued his curiosity. Frequently he chose at random, addressing

the stranger with as much politeness as one could ask of a Haroun-al-Raschid. The stranger would then stumble up six flights of stairs to Mr. Hare's garret where they gave him the sofa and offered him Scotch whisky to drink. Then Mr. Burke would ask him about the most surprising incidents of his life. He was an insatiable listener, was Mr. Burke. The stranger's recital was always interrupted before daybreak by Mr. Hare, whose manner of interrupting was invariably the same and very impressive. He had a habit of passing behind the sofa and putting his hands over the speaker's mouth while Mr. Burke would suddenly sit down on the gentleman's chest at the same moment. The two of them would remain thus, motionless, imagining the conclusion they never heard. In this manner Messrs. Burke and Hare terminated a large number of histories the world has never learned.

When the tale was definitely stopped with the suffocation of the teller, they would ex-



plore the mystery, stripping the unknown man, admiring his jewelry, counting his money, reading his letters. Certain items of correspondence were often not without interest. Then they would lay the corpse away to cool in Mr. Hare's big desk. And now Mr. Burke would demonstrate the practical force of his genius.

To waste none of the adventure's pleasure, he held that the body should be fresh but not warm.

In the first years of the nineteenth century medical students had a passion for anatomy, though religious prejudices made it difficult for them to secure subjects for dissection. Mr. Burke's clear mind had taken note of this scientific dilemma. No one knows how he first established an alliance with that venerable and learned practitioner, Dr. Knox, of the faculty of Edinburgh. Perhaps Mr. Burke had followed his public lectures in spite of the fact that his imagination inclined rather to artistic things. It is certain, how-

ever, that he promised to aid Dr. Knox as best he could, and that Dr. Knox agreed to pay him for his pains. The scale of prices varied, declining from the choice corpses of young men to the less desirable remains of the aged. The latter interested Dr. Knox only moderately and Mr. Burke held the same opinion, for old men, he claimed, always had less imagination. Dr. Knox came to be known among his colleagues for his splendid knowledge of anatomy. This dillittante life, led so enjoyably by Messrs. Burke and Hare, brought them to what was certainly the classic period of their career.

For the power of Mr. Burke's genius soon led him beyond rules and regulations of a tragedy in which he had always a story to listen to and a confidence to keep. Alone he progressed (it is useless to consider the influence of Mr. Hare) towards a sort of romanticism. No longer satisfied with the setting provided by Mr. Hare's garret, he invented a procedure to make use of the

nocturnal fogs. Numerous imitators have somewhat sullied the originality of his manner, but here is the veritable tradition of the master.

Mr. Burke's fertile imagination had grown weary of tales eternally reverting to human experiences. The result never equaled his expectation. So he came at last to value only the actual aspect of death . . . for him unfailingly varied. He concentrated his drama in the dénouement. The quality of the actors no longer mattered; he trained them at random, and his only property of the theater was a canvas mask filled with pitch. Mask in hand, he would walk out on foggy nights accompanied by Mr. Hare. Approaching the first individual who chanced to pass, he would walk a few steps in front, then turn and place the mask quickly and firmly over the subject's face. Immediately Messrs. Burke and Hare would grasp the arms of their actor, one on each side. The mask full of pitch pre-

sented simply a genial instrument for stifling cries and strangling. It was tragic. The fog muffled the gestures of the rôle and softened them. Some of the actors seemed to mimic drunken men. This short scene over, Messrs. Burke and Hare would take a cab in which they would disrobe their guest, Mr. Hare caring for the costumes while Mr. Burke delivered the cadaver fresh and clean to Dr. Knox.

Unlike most biographers it is here I leave Messrs. Burke and Hare, at the peak of their glory. Why destroy such an artistic effect by requiring them to languish along to the end of their lives, revealing their defects and their deceptions? We need only remember them, mask in hand, walking abroad on foggy nights. For their end was sordid like so many others. One of them, it appears, was hanged and Dr. Knox was forced to quit Edinburgh. Mr. Burke left no other works.

THE END

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*Handwritten:*  
 1844  
 R M













